Rudyard Kipling

Hilton Brown

RUDYARD KIPLING

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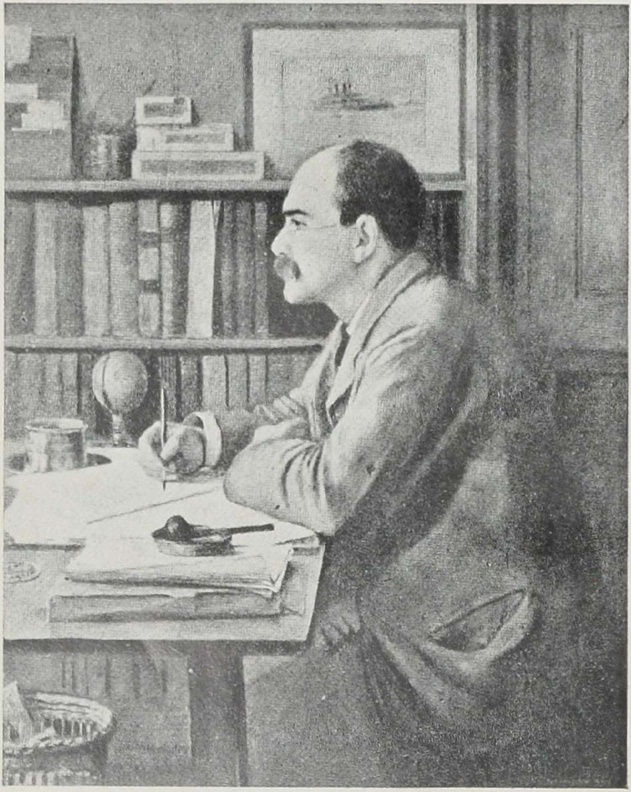

Kipling at the Turn of the Century

From the painting by Sir Philip Burne-Jones, Bart., in the National Portrait Gallery

RUDYARD KIPLING

A NEW APPRECIATION

BY

HILTON BROWN

With a Foreword

by

FRANK SWINNERTON

"When writing of authors, show them, if you can, in their relation to life as well as their relation to literature"

Edmund Gosse to *Coulson Kernahan*

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TO
ALICE MACDONALD FLEMING
("TRIX")
WHOSE HELP HAS BEEN INVALUABLE AND
WHOSE KINDNESS TO AN IMPORTUNATE
INTRUDER ANGELIC

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FOREWORD

I TAKE pride in the publication of this book; not because I had any hand in its composition, but because I mercilessly exhorted Mr. Hilton Brown to begin it, to continue it, and to finish it in spite of every obstacle of diffidence and overwork in another field. Mr. Brown laboured in odd hours of the day and night, and at times when leisure and recreation had been fully earned; and I stood darkly in the background, cracking my whip. I had two simple arguments, first that a book on Kipling was a necessity of the literary hour, second that Mr. Brown was pre-eminently the man to write such a book.

To take the second point first. Anybody who has read his novels, especially that grand full-length picture of a life, *Torteval,* knows that Mr. Hilton Brown has first-hand knowledge of India and a remarkable literary gift. This author does not imitate other novelists. His themes and treatment are drawn from original experience. And *Torteval,* which is based surely upon character, follows character without qualm through action to its full, terrible consequences. It is engrossing as a story. It is the work of an interesting and valuable novelist who, as he has time to write the novels of his rich maturity, will rank with the best of his contemporaries.

As to Kipling, I am told that he alone, among all the famous Victorian authors, has not enjoyed a wartime rush of new or nostalgic readers. This may be because his great popularity has never faltered. Or it may be that he has miraculously bridged the interval of neglect between fame and immortality which all writers suffer when they die. But he has certainly long been undervalued by those who rate fastidious repulsion of the uncongenial above catholic taste. Kipling, indeed, has been critically unlucky. Until Mr. T. S. Eliot

caused consternation among the genteel by analysing his virtues as a poet he was safely dismissed by them as a sort of literary bounder who was somehow responsible for the Boer War.

It was quite otherwise fifty years ago, before Mr. Hilton Brown knew anything about this subject. For one thing, the Victorians, although bidding farewell to the illusion of giants, still believed in geniuses. They had been shocked by the early death of Robert Louis Stevenson, and were being simultaneously shocked by two importations from France, realism and dandyism; but they had enthusiasm to spare for every example of the romantic and the picturesque. And Kipling arrived as a meteor might have done. He had punch, sophistication, sentiment and rhetoric. Early familiarity with the Bible gave him an easy use of prophetic language. The first of the modern boys who never grew up, he gloried in the world, particularly that part of the world which was India, as a Never-Never Land. The first journalist, since Defoe, to bring a sense of news to the service of fiction, he excelled in the yarn. And, unlike so many other journalists who have since made the he-man club method a commonplace, he had genius.

But he had limitations too, which the age threw into relief. Whereas British political Liberalism was seriously troubled by the responsibilities and perhaps even the unjustifiable authority of Empire, he had precociously matured in a society in which, while responsibility was accepted, authority was natural and hierarchic. He detested Liberalism. And the spirit of Liberalism, which was in fact the conscience of a people, was rising. It was rising before the Boer War; after the Boer War it swept Imperialism into a corner for nearly forty years, until, during the present war, Labour leaders rediscovered the Empire as a political asset. When Liberalism reached power in 1906, most of what Kipling stood for politically was forgotten in concern for social reform. That concern persisted. Kipling did not share it.

He had seen the Empire, and the Empire filled his dreams

In literature, once the grand-scale Victorians were gone, and the costume romantics had followed them, a sterner age was ushered in by derision of parents, patriotism, "drum and trumpet history," and Victorianism itself. The wider public, of course, did not desert Victorians or romantics, because the wider public has its own measures for literature; but a new rather bullying intelligentzia, travelling by way of Bergson, Freud, Marx and mathematics, reached the conclusion that nothing popular—that, sometimes, nothing quite intelligible—can possibly call for attention. By this rather bullying intelligentzia Kipling was ignored. He was popular. He was easily intelligible. The drum was his favourite instrument. He did not despise the Army, wealth, the British, or the vulgarities of life. On the contrary, his idiom was often a vulgar one, especially when he was poetically in earnest; he took Empire very seriously; he favoured military training for all; and he believed to the end of his days in the hierarchy of sahibs. He could have no interest for generations to whom Shaw, Wells, Lawrence, Joyce and Virginia Woolf represented progressive emancipation from Victorian standards, and to whom an empire was something wickedly acquired and abominably misgoverned by the very sahibs of Kipling's vision.

I think Mr. Hilton Brown's book will remove some misunderstandings and revive critical interest in Kipling. It is not an idolatrous work. It uses both candour and irony in its presentation of the man himself; and it is new and pungent in its estimates both of individual pieces and of Kipling's genius as a whole. Moreover it does this very valuable thing. Drawing (as one would expect in a book by a good novelist) a real man, whose faults and incomprehensible idiosyncrasies are inseparable from his character, it shows how Kipling's genius grew out of that man and his extraordinarily self-confined experience, whether the scene of that experience were Bombay, Southsea, Westward Ho!, Lahore, New Eng-

land, South Africa or Sussex. And it asks, overrating neither the work nor the man, where in our own or any other modern literature the two are to be paralleled. In so doing, it makes a claim for Kipling's lasting literary importance which to me, at least, seems unanswerable.

I therefore end as I began, in expressing pride in the publication of such a book; and will keep the reader no longer from what I believe will give him new knowledge and great pleasure.

FRANK SWINNERTON

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THIS book lays no claim to any special degree of scholarship or research; I have had access to no documentary sources hitherto untapped. It would be misleading however—to say nothing of being ungrateful—not to mention that I have obtained much first-hand information, some of which I believe to be previously unpublished, from Mrs. A. M. Fleming, Kipling's sister, together with much valuable corroboration or contradiction of existing material. Among others who have helped me with advice, criticism and information, I would particularly like to record my indebtedness to Mr. J. H. C. Brooking, a member of the Council of the Kipling Society.

HILTON BROWN

London
April 1945

PART ONE

THE FACTORS

I

OBITUARY

"But today I leave the galley"
KIPLING, *The Galley Slave*

RUDYARD KIPLING died in the first quarter of an hour of the 18th of January 1936. Two days later, on the 20th, King George the Fifth followed him. The smart thing to say at the time was that the King had taken his Trumpeter with him. However that may have been, it is certain that the King stole some of his Trumpeter's thunder.

For beyond question, some of Kipling's thunder was missing from those January skies. That is not to say that his passing went unnoticed; every paper of repute in this and in many other countries published immediately—or in the earliest possible issue—an obituary article. That many of these articles were hasty and perfunctory, ready-made in opinion and unsteady on points of fact, was in accordance with the journalistic practice of our times. Mr. X was invited, at short notice, to write a thousand words on Kipling which would interest the readers of the *Daily Y*. Mr. X, who may or may not have been the best choice for the task, and who would presumably have wished more leisure for its execution, turned in his thousand words and the readers of the *Daily Y* were comforted by them, or infuriated, or mildly interested, according to their several circumstances. For the time being, Mr. X served; but there was a general feeling that there the matter could not—and of course would not—rest. Presently the voice of authority would speak;

presently a tribute would be paid which should be more than a formal obituary catalogue or a scramble of hastily recollected memories. But even before Kipling's ashes were buried, the second shadow had fallen upon the nation. The death of a king is always the death of a king; but the death of George the Fifth was more than that. Tardily perhaps had his subjects discovered how much they loved him—the fervour of the 1935 Jubilee had surprised not a few, including, it is said, the monarch himself; but once the discovery was made, the British people never lost sight of it. The darkness of the national disaster could be made no deeper by the extinction of a mere light of letters, however brilliant in its own galaxy. That light would have shone again in memory had the right voice or voices spoken in time; but the expected pronouncement of authority tarried; the appropriate tribute remained unpaid, the days passed and the months passed and the great things that should have been said were still unuttered. And for long years Mr. X's thousand words, such as they were, held the field.

This was in itself a strange phenomenon, but Mr. X's words were not without their own peculiarities as well. Outstanding among these was their note of determined realism; this pervaded not only the contributions of Mr. X, but also those of the more oracular voices which were, in fact, heard at the time of Kipling's death. One searches the files for enthusiasm, for eulogy, for tears, for even a blast of real old-fashioned vituperation, such as would have delighted the dead man's heart; and one searches them almost in vain. Few of the outstanding literary figures of the time were completely silent; few of them spoke as they might have been expected to speak on Rudyard Kipling. Shaw's widely publicized tribute is characteristically grudging. Kipling, said Shaw, never grew up; he began by being behind the times. "I don't think," said Shaw, "that the reading of Kipling has ever changed anybody's life very much." He added—rather irrelevantly—that the same thing could be said of Sir Walter

Scott; but if the two authors were to be thus conjoined, surely there were other similarities which might equally have been noticed. Masefield, Noyes, John Buchan, Hugh Walpole—most of the great guns fired, but the shells seemed loaded with only a practice charge and the resulting detonation was reminiscent of those debilitated salvoes loosed from the *Archimandrite* for the benefit of "M. de C." Masefield allowed Kipling "some of the best short stories ever written"; the others processed through the commonplaces of slightly patronizing approval. "Kipling is dead," his major literary contemporaries seemed to reflect. "What on earth are we to say about it?" And a prosaic, " Well, that's that," not unfairly sums up the results of their cogitation.

Lesser lights shone more boldly—and with a warmer flame. Desmond MacCarthy, in one of the very best of the contemporary articles, called Kipling " the most wide-flung combustion in the sky of English letters since Byron and Dickens." It was " magic, magic all the way," said James Douglas; Kipling would never die. Robert Lynd, sympathetically analysing, made him " an interpreter of the wonder of life in the common world." Other voices were heard across the spaces of the globe; the New York *Saturday Review of Literature* had a good phrase: " he enthralled by sheer virtuosity of sensation transferred." Mrs. Sarojini Naidu sent a rather two-edged compliment from India. The *Mercure de France* with that clarity of vision so often given to foreigners in regard to Kipling (and withheld from our own critics) said he was " *un grand primitif—une des plus hautes consciences du monde.*" The *Popolo di Roma* took a very similar line; Kipling exalted, it felt, " the simple and elementary values "; that, it added, was why the Italian people liked him. Finally our own *Times* gave him a leader which opened cautiously but came down in the end on the side of generosity. His writings will live; they " were composed at a crucial period in the history of the race and there are no others of the same vitality to put beside him." And

its *Literary Supplement*, after somewhat debunking the "magic, magic all the way," rallied to a summary which conceded Kipling the status of a magician in the short story, one of the finest romances of his time (*Kim* this was), and, as a poet, a mass of "vigorous pithy faulty work of the second order" plus one patriotic hymn which had become a part of every national ceremony.

This was all very well—though some of it sounded even at the time as coming rather from the head than from the heart. There was a wariness behind it all, an eye on the reader, an undiscovered question, "Dare I go so far?" or the much more sinister query, "Am I extolling a back number? Am I resuscitating a corpse?" Still, for the time being and to meet the immediate exigencies of the situation, the disciplined and mezzoforte chorus served. Presently, no doubt, the giants would pick up their megaphones and resound. But the giants did no such thing. They did not leap down into the arena and battle for Kipling's reputation. They did not brandish their spears and attack one another in debate as to whether "An Habitation Enforced" is a better story than "Love o' Women." They did not seek one another's blood to determine whether "The Way through the Woods" is or is not poetry. They passed smoothly to an indifferent silence. And for the most part, silent they have remained.

Let us now indulge in one of those enjoyable if profitless speculations which open with an impossible condition; in this instance, "if Kipling had died forty years earlier—not in 1936 but in 1896?" would there have been any difference in the reaction of the major critics of the day? Quite certainly there would. Gosse—still Kipling's friend—would have followed up in the *Century* his long article of 1891 with another even longer, fuller and more perspicacious—once again taking with complete seriousness everything Kipling ever wrote. Le Gallienne would have forestalled his criticisms of 1900 and inveighed against Kipling's brutality and

insincerity, and his dispassionate view of the great Liberal panaceas. Quite certainly Henry James would have amplified the introduction he had already written to *Mine Own People,* discoursing further, with mingled admiration and distaste, on Kipling's colossal cheek. Francis Adams would have dipped his silver pen in gall and coined fresh and unforgettable phrases of approval and abuse. In fact, it would have been an occasion which no critic who valued his reputation as a connoisseur of literary forces could have dared to let pass; for the difference between the Kiplings of 1896 and 1936 was simply this—that while both were read, the former was also criticized. This is a distinction which makes no great odds to the common reader; it makes considerable odds to the critic, and to the author himself all the odds in the world. Since 1900 there has been no real criticism of Kipling; admirers have written to express their admiration; students have written to record the results of their studies; but there has been no *attack*—and as Kipling would have been the first to realize with glee it is when an author begins to make enemies that he begins to matter. No second J. K. Stephens in all those years has longed for a day "when the Rudyards cease from Kipling"; it did not matter to the twentieth century whether they ceased from Kipling or not.

That Kipling might have died in the 'nineties is not, of course, an entirely baseless supposition. He very nearly did. On that fatal visit to America in 1899 he lay so ill with pneumonia in a New York hotel that the obituaries were ready and the world hung waiting for the dismal news. *If* he had died? Then doubtless the critics would have made the world ring with the clash of estimates; then every serious review would have carried an article—though their material must needs have stopped with *The Jungle Books,* and all that came thereafter would never have been. . . . . And yet, with all that came thereafter to add to the store, there was, in 1936, what almost amounted to silence.

Was Kipling then one of those unfortunates who survive

their hour and their apex, who fail to die at the proper time? *Should* he have died of that pneumonia in the Grenoble Hotel in 1899? Had he died in 1899, would his name have remained for ever emblazoned upon the scroll of English literature; or should we even now be looking back (once in a way) to yet another myth of the 'nineties—a sort of twin Rider Haggard, while *The Naulahka* travelled Lethewards linked with *King Solomon's Mines*, and Ortheris, Learoyd, and Mulvaney drifted out of memory with Alan Quatermain?

One's answer to that question today would be at least cautious; a quarter of a century ago they were much more certain. In the nineteen-twenties it would have been easy to say that Kipling's repute, had he died in the 'nineties, would have been at least no less. Those were the days when it was correct to say that Kipling "had written nothing since 1900." In 1918 it was possible to write—or at any rate F. T. Raymond wrote it—"Mr. Kipling is not perhaps a spent force. But it seems safe to say that he will never again be more than a minor one." A year or two later Philip Guedalla could say as boldly—and with more truth—that "criticism, through the mouth of Mr. Henry James in 1891, had said its last word on Mr. Kipling." And here is a transatlantic picture of the latter-day Kipling taken from one of the most recent studies, that of Edmund Wilson in *The Wound and the Bow*: "The ordinary person said simply that Kipling was 'written out.' . . . The thick, dark and surly little man who had dug himself into Bateman's Burwash, Sussex, was left to his bristling privacy and only occasionally evoked a rebuke for the intolerant and vindictive views which, emerging with the suddenness of a snapping turtle, he sometimes gave vent to in public."

That certainly is not the picture of one of the literary leaders of a nation. But neither is it a really recognizable picture of Kipling. It was never as bad as that; it was never nearly as bad. Whatever may have been the attitude of "Bateman's Burwash, Sussex" to intruders, and especially

perhaps to American journalists, many millions of people continued to read Kipling's works. The ordinary person may have said "simply" that Kipling was written out; but the fact remains that at any time during the last forty years that same ordinary person could be provoked into hot and partisan argument by the mere mention of his name. In any club or college—or for that matter, in any railway carriage or saloon bar—acrimonious talk could be ensured indefinitely by the simple process of asking innocently which was Kipling's best story. With the possible exception of Shakespeare there is no English author from whose works so many people could exchange tolerably accurate quotations. If Kipling were "written out" by 1920, then the work he *had* written before that date was an unconscionable time dying.

Was he written out by 1920? Was he ever written out at all? Let me state as early and as clearly as possible my personal conviction to the contrary; rather, his art was an ascending art, becoming the finer as it became more adventurous, conquering the more brilliantly because it advanced, against far more significant forces, into far more difficult and dangerous country. It is easy to pick a story from among Kipling's latest work and exclaim on the descent from his own standards; but then it is easy to pick such a story at any point in the half-century covered by Kipling's literary career. At all times and at all stages he was capable of lapses and self-betrayals. And the plain fact remains that much of his later work has not been so much written out as written off; it has been decried *ex parte,* condemned unread. To the assertion, "Kipling wrote nothing worth while during the last thirty years of his life," it is often useful to reply, "Indeed! How would you compare the art of, say, 'The Janeites' with that of, say, 'The Gadsbys'?" Or—"let us take two stories which, though sharply differentiated, have several aspects in common—'A Madonna of the Trenches' and 'Love o' Women'; how would you rank and assess these?" A few such questions will all too often make it clear that the

interlocutor has read the later and latest Kipling—if at all—with only perfunctory attention and with the preconceived notion that he was contemplating the work of a writer long past his best. Had not the critics told him so? It would be interesting to discover how many of the detractors of the later Kipling have actually read any fair proportion of his work; or better still to experiment with a class of students who had read neither the author himself nor any of his critics, and who were completely ignorant of Kipling's chronology; they should start with *Debits and Credits* and *Limits and Renewals* and work backwards. The order in which they eventually assessed their author's work would be profoundly interesting; it would be as profoundly surprising if their final verdict were to the effect that Kipling was "written out" in 1920.

To sum up, then, this prefatory chapter. In 1936 there died a man whose name had once resounded throughout the temple of English literature and the explosion of whose genius had rocked its walls. His name still resounded—but in the fore-courts, rather than in the Holy of Holies. No writer was more keenly loved, debated, plumbed, searched and remembered—except among those whose business it was to set the standards of taste. No great writer was so near the hearts of his readers; no great writer had been, perhaps, since Dickens. There were millions who bowed their heads when they heard of his death; there were millions to whom the thought that there would never be another Kipling story was a personal wound, poignant as the loss of a friend. But the leaders of literary thought, the king-makers of writing, surveyed the event with comparative equanimity; they wrote of it coldly and cautiously; if they had any enthusiasm they were at pains to dissemble it; they wrote down Kipling; or they did not write at all. Was this a phase or did it indeed forecast the ultimate judgment of time? Were the critics of the 'nineties all at sea, with their eager interest, their half-terrified delight in their discovery,

their unequivocal admiration, their bitterly unequivocal dislike? "Will there ever come a season"—when the wheel shall have spun round, when the verdict of the nineteen-twenties and 'thirties will be ridiculed and the verdict of the eighteen-nineties restored to its place?

This book will attempt an answer to that question. But first another question must be tackled. How did this come about? Whether the fall were a trough between two peaks or the final chute into oblivion—what caused it? What were the processes involved? To answer this we must study the effective factors—Rudyard Kipling himself, his writings, his times, his contemporaries, the shapes that moulded his life.

II

THE YEARS BETWEEN

" The whole Kipling story is the greatest phenomenon that has occurred in literature "

SIR GEORGE MACMUNN

SOME day no doubt—and may it be soon!—an official biography of Kipling will appear and will unveil much that has been hidden and dispel many cherished illusions. In the meantime it is strange how ill informed we are about an author we have taken so closely to our hearts. Few of Kipling's admirers or detractors could answer a dozen elementary questions about his life; a host who could quote at length from *Plain Tales* to *Limits and Renewals,* from "Lispeth" to " The Tender Achilles," could not write down offhand the maiden name of his wife, the period of his stay

in India or how he came to know so much about the Newfoundland Banks. For this there are various reasons—not least among them his own privacy complex; as if defeated by his own hedgehog methods, interest has centred on the writing and not on the man who wrote. Those who have discussed him in print have been so taken up with the assessment of his place in letters that they have allowed themselves little time to inquire by what steps he reached it. Perhaps too, with the exception of one or two brilliant intervals in the early stages, his life was not in itself very interesting; the life of a hedgehog seldom is. Yet even with these allowances, the fog of ignorance surrounding Kipling's life is remarkably dense—and few have busied themselves in sweeping it away. It is true that towards the end of his long life he set down his autobiography, but a more tantalizing work than *Something of Myself* with its odd stresses and maddening omissions can rarely have been penned. There may be immense revelation between its lines but unfortunately the lines themselves have yet to be ruled. It is the more necessary, as a preliminary to the study of Kipling the writer, to construct some outline of Kipling the man, who planned and ventured and triumphed and sorrowed for a span of three score years and ten at "a crucial period in the history of our race."

But before a step is taken on that journey or a stroke planted in that outline, there must be attacked and dispersed one of the most persistent calumnies of our time—the statement, reiterated with assurance or hinted with malicious delight, that Rudyard Kipling was, if not actually Eurasian, at least not wholly white. He had "a touch of the tar brush," he was "four annas in the rupee." Forty years ago this libel was implicitly believed and was disseminated—probably from no worse motive than a desire to seem well-informed—by many persons who had served or lived in India. Even to this day it is frequently repeated, and repudiation is still received with honest surprise. And yet

it is utterly a lie. More than that—it is demonstrably a lie; and one of the charges against those who have written on Kipling must be that they have let it pass or at best have tackled it half-heartedly. They have—or some of them have—explicitly denied it; but they have not gone to the pains of showing its impossibility—a thing that can be done with very little trouble and the minimum of investigation.

Rudyard Kipling was the son of John Lockwood Kipling and Alice Macdonald. To close all possible loopholes, he *was* their son. His parents were married on the 18th of March 1865 and he, their eldest child, was born on the second-last day of that year. It is obviously unnecessary to underline the implications involved in these dates. At the time of their marriage, neither John Lockwood Kipling nor Alice Macdonald had ever been within many thousand miles of India; no doubt it was the chance appointment of Kipling to a post in the Bombay School of Arts that made their marriage a sudden possibility, but that was the first time that the East had entered into either of their lives. The Macdonald parents indeed regarded India with grave distrust; it was *terra incognitissima* and the Mutiny was still recent enough to raise in their minds very serious objections to their daughter's marriage. There was no family association with this new and untried land. It is true that one of the Macdonald brothers—Henry—sat and passed the I.C.S. examination, but as his fiancee subsequently declined to face life in India, he abandoned that career *in limine*. He was rewarded, perhaps deservedly, by the lady's jilting him in due course—a fragment of gossip which carries us no further in our present quest.

If the trail is pursued back into the generations, the calumny becomes only the more unsustainable. Kipling is a Yorkshire name; and the record of these particular Kiplings can be traced back to the eighteenth century. They were plain, simple and lowly folk; they were good churchmen, with a tendency to develop into Wesleyan ministers; but they

eschewed foreign missions and they married locally. Rudyard Kipling's grandfather, Joseph Kipling, a Wesleyan preacher with a dark heavy face illuminated by a pair of fine eyes, married—rather above his own station—Frances Lockwood, the daughter of a Yorkshire architect; they lived in Pickering where their son, John Lockwood Kipling, was born. Frances Lockwood is said to have been dark-eyed with almost black hair, but her offspring alternated between "Spanish" brunettes and apple-blossom blondes. There was—much later; in the 'eighties—a family joke regarding a putative Spanish ancestor rescued from one of the Armada wrecks; it may have been what the Scots call a "sooth boord," a true jest, for there were many such cases. Mrs. Fleming, Kipling's sister, has a pleasant memory of Rudyard in India begging his mother to shake out her family tree and "dislodge the nigger in the woodpile." The reply was that there were black Yorkshiremen as well as black Highlanders, a fact which is undoubtedly—and pertinently—true.

The "black Highlander," of course, would have come from the maternal side of the family, the Macdonald side; on this again there is no better record of any Oriental connection. That family is said to have descended from a member of the clan who fled to Ireland after Culloden; it reappeared in the Midlands of England in the person of a certain James Macdonald, who was—strange as it may seem—a Wesleyan preacher. Thus Kipling had an ancestry of preachers on both sides, and of several generations; the curious may notice in Wesley's Chapel in City Road a tablet commemorating the ministry of three successive Macdonalds in the direct line, covering a period of a hundred and forty-four years; the third and last of them being Kipling's uncle and godfather, Frederic Macdonald. The Rev. George Macdonald, son of the Rev. James, took as his second wife, after a tragic first marriage, Hannah Jones, the blonde daughter of a local merchant. She bore no fewer than eleven children, seven of

whom survived to majority; four of the five girls were beautiful and, not surprisingly, made remarkable marriages. One became the mother of Stanley Baldwin, another married Edward Poynter, a third married Burne-Jones, and the eldest (Alice) married John Lockwood Kipling. The function of the male Macdonalds seems to have been to introduce their sisters to their future husbands; Henry, whose cavalier treatment of the Indian Civil Service we have already noticed, went to King Edward's School at Birmingham where he met Burne-Jones (and incidentally Cormell Price, later of Westward Ho! and *Stalky*). Frederic, the other brother, was at Burslem when he met John Lockwood Kipling who was then designing for the Burslem potteries. As Rudyard Kipling would have said, "See how it all fits in!"

But what does *not* fit in anywhere is the unknown and unspecified Oriental, that "nigger in the woodpile" from whom Rudyard Kipling received his touch of the tar-brush or his four annas in the rupee. Except for Henry Macdonald's brief dalliance with the lure of proconsulship, none of these many people ever had anything to do with India, or any thought of it; and with the exception of John Lockwood Kipling none of them ever went near it. Rudyard was born within six months of his parents' arrival in the country. The Oriental intervener is thus an impossibility; he is a demonstrable impossibility; and these tedious genealogies will not have been written and read in vain if this fact may now be taken as established.

The lie being exploded, it is perhaps hardly worth while to speculate as to its origin. It is a reasonably probable guess that it was born in India, where a dozen different motives may have engendered it—malice, jealousy, idleness or genuine suspicion. It was commonly said in Simla of the 'eighties (and, we can quite readily believe, with some justice) that young Kipling "needed taking down a peg," and a literal denigration may have seemed in some quarters

the most appropriate corrective. The lie as to colour originates more frequently among women than among men, and there were reasons why the more desperate section of feminine Simla should dislike the Kiplings. The family had acquired, as by natural right, a position in Indian Society far above that warranted by Kipling senior's status on the Civil List; Rudyard's pen was deadly dangerous; he had moreover a charming and attractive sister, too constantly in request, perhaps, for the peace of certain minds. That fury for which hell hath no parallel betakes herself not infrequently, in India, to allegations of mixed descent which—like all more obvious falsehoods in India—are not infrequently believed. In the case of Rudyard Kipling, moreover, deliberate malice and genuine suspicion could alike summon support from appearances—though not to the extent that has sometimes been suggested. Although never so dark and sallow as his Poynter cousins, either of whom could have passed for a Spaniard or an Italian—and frequently did, Kipling had the ivory skin that neither flushes nor freckles; his hair was dark and though it was fine in texture where the Eurasian's is wiry and coarse, that was a distinction to which ill-willed gossip might shut its eyes. To this generally sombre effect a precocious—and, it may have been thought, un-English—hairiness contributed. The celebrated side-whiskers appear to have been no more in truth than what were termed "sideburns," of the kind exalted by Lord Curzon; but it is on record that at the age of seventeen young Rudyard's chest was so densely covered with hair that the attentions of a barber were necessary before a mustard plaster could successfully be applied. These symptoms, combining to produce a general and un-Nordic duskiness might well be seized upon, heedlessly or otherwise, in a Society avid for labels and stigmata and ever jealously on the lookout for the mote in its neighbour's eye. Perhaps what turned the scale was his most striking feature—the heavy bushy black eyebrows, much darker than his hair, which cast a shadow over eyes, nose

and mouth. (They reappeared, curiously enough, in his daughter Josephine who, despite her brunette American mother, elected otherwise to follow the blonde side of the family tradition.) Perhaps again it was thought—in a society then, as now, completely devoid of imagination—that no man could " know so much about natives " as Kipling did unless he were united to them by blood. There are, of course, accounts of the young and adolescent Kipling which represent him as downright swarthy and there is at least one school group in which he appears, which would lend colour —literally—to the most sinister suspicions. But Heaven help us all if we are to be judged on our appearances in the school group. It is at any rate certain that when he was a very small boy his hair was fair, with the fairness of flax, rather than the " new-penny " brightness of his sister's, who was Ruskin's " Coppertop." His eyes at the same time were blue. But with the years his hair darkened and his eyes turned to grey—all perhaps a part of the general darkening and thickening which was to lead to the false and ugly insinuation of mixed blood.

It may be a relief to turn from these coils of falsehood, whether malicious or merely idle, to the recital of a few bald family facts. Rudyard Kipling, then, was born in Bombay on the 30th December 1865. He was baptized in the Bombay Cathedral and in accordance with the Kipling family tradition, by which first-born males alternated between "Joseph" and "John," he was named *Joseph* Rudyard. Theorists on the power and influence of names may speculate on the possible results had he chosen the former Christian name instead of the second; would " Joseph Kipling " have gone as far as " Rudyard "? He appears to have felt some misgivings himself for he never used the " Joseph " and at school he gave out that the "J" stood for " John "; he would recall " Joseph " however, when it suited him for purpose of apt quotation or disguise, and " Yusuf " was one of his earliest and favourite *noms de plume* . . . . He

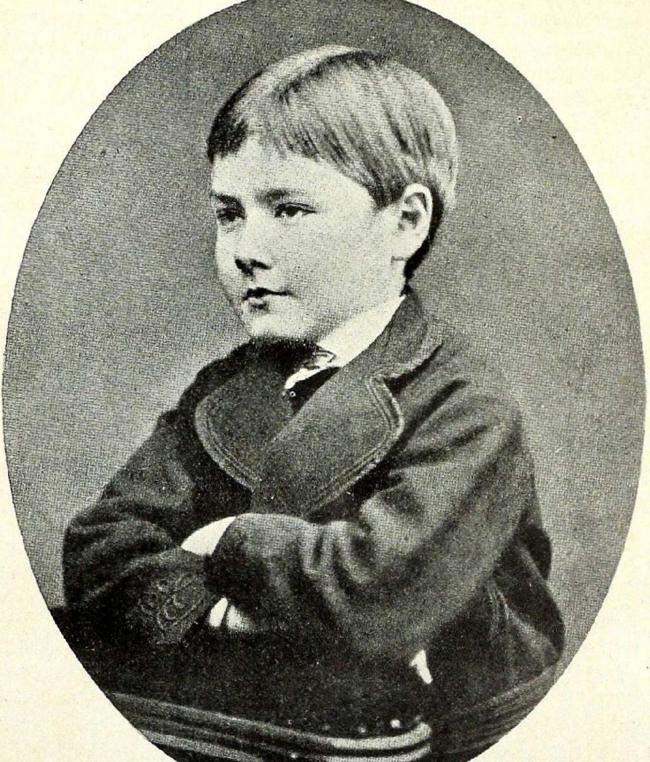
was educated at the United Services College at Westward Ho! In 1892 he was married in London (at the "Pepperpot" church in Langham Place) to Caroline Starr Balestier. There were three children of the marriage: Josephine (1892), Elsie (1895) and John (1897). Josephine died of pneumonia in New York during the fatal visit of 1899. John fell as a second lieutenant in the Irish Guards, in the attack on Chalk Pit Wood during the second battle of Loos in September of 1915; he was killed and buried by the burst of a shell and his body was never recovered. Elsie (Mrs. Bambridge) survives. Rudyard Kipling himself died on the 18th of January 1936. His widow died in December of 1939. These are the milestones in his life; they are the last things anyone would learn from his published works. For it is characteristic of *Something of Myself* that Mrs. Kipling is never mentioned by name, Josephine is never mentioned at all; of John it is only said that he " arrived on a warm August night of '97 under what seemed every good omen." One has to read the tragedy of Josephine in a single line of " Merrow Down " and the tragedy of John in those two words " what seemed."

The life that was lived between 1865 and 1936 falls easily into compartments or epochs. First a childhood in Bombay which probably differed greatly from no other Anglo-Indian childhood; the embryo Kuppeleen Sahib was no more spoilt and no less, became no more and no less precocious than any other brat that played round the bandstand of an evening. He put words together at a very early age—in Hindustani; but curiously enough he made no attempt to read nor was any attempt made to teach him. These years dwelt with him, however, all through his days as a cloud of ill-comprehended but potent memories; the talk of the bazaar, the lore of bearer and ayah, their stories and their standards, worked themselves into a compost that lay deep and central in his mind. This halcyon epoch terminated all too soon; at a very early age—even by Anglo-Indian standards—Kipling and his younger sister were taken " home " on the

ground that the climate of India was unsuitable to young children—a pretext which neither of them accepted and which they long regarded as an impudent and treacherous falsehood. What was wrong with Nasik? There was at that time some reason why their faith in the goodness of this world and the wisdom of their parents should totter; for they were boarded at Southsea in the house of a family which has received—no doubt deservedly—one of the most fearful castigations in literature, the infamous household of *Baa Baa Black Sheep*. It is a common error to represent the retired naval officer who presided over this doleful dwelling as a relative of Lockwood Kipling's but it was not so; the officer advertised and the Kiplings answered his advertisement. The error may perhaps have arisen from the pleasant if rather idiotic Anglo-Indian custom by which all grown-ups are courtesy " uncles " and " aunts "; little Rudyard and little Trix (as his sister called herself) habitually alluded to the naval officer and his wife as " uncle " and " auntie." (Similarly, Cormell Price of the United Services College, no relation at all, was " Uncle Crom.") That it was in an evil day for the two children that the Southsea advertisement was answered by their anxious parents, no reader of *Baa Baa Black Sheep* and *Something of Myself* can reasonably doubt; the former, under the guise of fiction, presents this gloomy abode with photographic accuracy. There " Ruddy " was quite consistently ill-treated, " Trix " as consistently misguided for six weary years. In extenuation of " Uncle Harry " and his wife (let the *Baa Baa* names be retained and the real ones buried in merciful oblivion) it can only be said that " Ruddy " was, when he came under their rule, a very spoilt Anglo-Indian six-year-old, noisy and exacting and—as at all times during the first thirty years of his life—appallingly exuberant; yet even with these allowances it is hard to pardon downright cruelty to the attractive little boy who looks out at us from contemporary photographs. " Uncle," —he liked Trix to call him " Daddy "—was by disposition

kind but in that household completely ineffectual; "Auntie" was apparently a type of religious sadist with many of the attributes of a prison wardress. The Demon Boy was a demon indeed, combining a taste for physical bullying with a considerable ingenuity in mental torture; from the former "Trix" was emancipated by a fortunate tendency to bruise easily and revealingly, but the latter was shared by both the children with soul-destroying effect. In this pleasaunce "Ruddy" had a downright evil and "Trix" at best a dull and stultifying childhood.

There is, of course, one aspect of this sorry story which the discerning will regard with unsatisfied curiosity. The parents, it is true, had gone sorrowfully back to India, but the aunts, the beautiful Macdonald aunts—the aunt who married Baldwin, the aunt who married Poynter, the aunt who married Burne-Jones—were all very comfortably in England; how were *they* blind to what was going on; how did not *they* swoop indignantly to the rescue? The fact remains that they did nothing; they seem even to have accepted with equanimity the information that their nephew was going blind. It has been plausibly suggested that they held aloof from the results of a marriage not quite in the high tradition of the family, that they felt their elder sister might have done better for herself, that there was a coldness. This may be plausible but it will not do; quite apart from the fact that, with the exception of Louisa Macdonald (Mrs. Baldwin) none of the sisters had at that stage done noticeably better for herself than Alice (Poynter and Burne-Jones being still but artists in embryo), it is recorded that every year "Ruddy", (far the worse sufferer at Forlorn Lodge), spent his Christmas holidays with at least one of the aunts—and spent them with every symptom of enjoyment and in every circumstance of loving care. One can but suppose that Ruddy and Trix were—even for children of the eighteen-seventies—amazingly reticent on the subjects that mattered to them and that the aunts, though affectionate, were most



"Black Sheep" Aged 8

"It is hard to pardon downright cruelty to the attractive little boy who looks out at us from contemporary photographs"

amazingly blind. One cannot but ask too—with all those aunts in profusion, why was Forlorn Lodge thought necessary at all? Perhaps Alice Kipling was here the villainess of the piece; she may have suffered from a selfish if understandable fear that if the children went to the custody of their aunts, she would find herself supplanted. She had refused an attractive offer from Mrs. Baldwin to take Trix into her house "as a nice little sister for Stanley." Yet the parting was from the outset known to be a four-year arrangement and it became, in actual fact, half as long again. Making all allowances for Victorian notions of the relationship between parent and child, it was a decision hard to understand or to forgive.

The six-year epoch of *Baa Baa* and Forlorn Lodge was succeeded—after a recuperative interval with the Misses Craik at Warwick Gardens—by another four-year period in which gloom and rigour, though still persisting, were very considerably abated; the *Stalky* period at the United Services College at Westward Ho! It has become as impossible to say what this institution was really like as to describe accurately the Kipling who inhabited it. It is not perhaps surprising that the "Headmaster's Assistant" at Westward Ho! who reviewed *Stalky* was unable to recognize his own school. It has been portrayed on the one hand as an inferno loud with the shrieks of tortured "fags" (in point of fact there were no fags) and the vengeful whistle of prefects' canes; on the other, as an assemblage of easy-going if unpredictable eccentrics. Stalky (Dunsterville) gives one version, McTurk (Beresford) another, Beetle a third. The degree of hardship involved in a sojourn within its portals has thus been variously estimated, and this is an important point because so much has often been made of its crushing and brutalizing effect on Kipling. Stalky (who was sent there much younger than his colleagues and preceded them in arrival by three years) represents it as a place distinguished by bullying amounting sometimes to torture and sometimes to danger of death, where

small boys, for instance, were held out of fifth-floor windows or " hanged " over the abysmal well of the stairs. This McTurk is inclined to pooh-pooh; both may in fact be right, for bullies come in waves and Stalky may have suffered from a gang which had passed away or spent itself before the other two arrived. Be this as it may, it is safe to assume that the United Services College was no bed of roses—especially for the newly arrived junior; that it was a case of hard tack and rough justice; that the lacerating tongue of King and the blunter but no less painful attentions of Molly Fairburn were no mere figments of the imagination. On the other hand, it was from no bed of roses that young Kipling had come: there was not much that Molly Fairburn or Gobby Maunsell between them could have taught the Demon Boy. Moreover, one does not remain for ever a junior, and there are few more exhilarating experiences than to survey from a height the pit from which one has laboriously climbed; the deeper and more horrid the pit, the livelier the exhilaration. If McTurk's account is to be believed—*pace* Stalky's plain hint that it is largely indebted to McTurk's imagination—" Gigger " (from " Giglamps," the real nickname of Beetle) spent a relatively easy incarceration, jocund much more often than gloomy, looked up to and respected much more than browbeaten and oppressed. That both the house of the Demon Boy and the school of Hard Cases produced in Kipling a hardening and coarsening effect is more than probable; but too much has almost certainly been built upon that hypothesis. The house of *Baa Baa,* he has told us himself, taught him to hate so heartily as to drain him of the capacity for hate ever after, and this is likely to be much nearer the truth than the supposition that he *therefore* went on hating for the rest of his life. The environment of Westward Ho! no doubt engendered in sheer self-defence a considerable degree of callousness without which life in that seminary would have been unliveable, but it may be only partially correct to attribute to it that intense interest in the brute *qua*

brute which Le Gallienne and his contemporaries were later to deplore so poignantly in Kipling's work.

As to Beetle, Beetle was a self-portrait but, like every other picture Kipling ever drew, this was a picture magnified, overcoloured and supercharged. The myopic ink-bespattered figure sprawling unkempt over his desk or brewing some abomination in his study has too often been accepted at face value as a photographic presentment of the Kipling of the day; and from this false beginning has been drawn a multitude of erroneous assumptions as to the humiliating sufferings and the brutalizing indignities to which such a figure would, in such a place, be exposed. The facts, supported by commonsense, are against these theories. The Rudyard Kipling who entered the United Services College in 1878 was no myopic dwarf but a sturdy, well set-up, rather smart little fellow of thirteen, capable of enjoying an eye-opening visit to the Paris Exposition in the company of his very stimulating father. "Into the small boys' house," says Beresford (with an unconscious suggestion of the Zoo), "fluttered a cheery capering podgy little fellow as precocious as ever he could be." There was even a foretaste of those celebrated Bombay whiskers for the small boy had, at thirteen, a moustache. This "combination of smile, specs and moustache" early established a reputation as a jester and a wit which accords but poorly with the theory of downtrodden misery. "Gigger" may be studied in a variety of poses in Beresford's contemporary sketches and though one may suspect that these, like his letterpress, are to some extent idealized, Turkey had certainly the gift—he turned it to commercial advantage in after life—of catching a likeness. Anything less resembling the bemused and grimy Beetle than the Gigger of these portraits it would be hard to imagine. They show us consistently a sleek smooth conceited contemptuous face, perfectly moulded—especially the mouth, which the celebrated moustache carefully follows—and illuminated by twinkling eyes. The brow is noble and the chin formidable; perhaps it is this,

together with the general suavity, which gives a slightly Oriental impression, as of a junior Buddha. There is nothing the very least uncouth or unkempt in any of the sketches; the figure is indeed dapper—except for some rather deplorable trousers. On the other hand it must be allowed that a house group of approximately the same date presents a much less prepossessing picture; we see here an outsize lumpy sprawling figure, with school cap awkwardly perched awry on an over-large head and surmounting a round pale and lifeless face. Those, however, who have posed for house groups may be inclined to make allowances.

Doubtless then, the " cheery capering podgy little fellow " had—as do all such little fellows—a very unpleasant time for his first couple of terms. He was at a disadvantage inasmuch as his sight debarred him from any proficiency in games; on the other hand he was amusing and could tell stories. And though he played no games, he early grew into great physical strength; this, fortified by an acid and resourceful tongue, should have saved him from any abnormally protracted period of persecution. He was careful and played diplomatically for safety; this indeed is in character, for a public caning is a most intolerable invasion of privacy. He edited the school magazine—it was revived by Cormell Price for this very purpose—and this at least was a task which must have given him the keenest enjoyment even though he was obliged to restrain himself from printing therein any of the " scurrilous and erotic verses " which Stalky says he wrote, and which perhaps led the harassed and neurotic King to prophesy that he would " die in a garret, a scurrilous pamphleteer." If we are to believe McTurk, his deshabille was that of the highbrow rather than of the sloven; his pose was contempt rather than subservience. It is true that " Foxy " is recorded as having said that Kipling was " not a favourite with the boys " but there is a marked difference between the negative of not being a favourite and the positive of being an outcast; and in any case, what *would* " Foxy "

say? No, it seems on the whole disproven that the Westward Ho! period, the Stalky period, was an epoch of humiliation and despair; if, later on, Kipling came to the exaltation of violence and the glorification of the brute, this cannot all be laid at the door of the United Services College. That he got something out of his sojourn in this unconventional establishment would seem to be shown by the verses "The Totem" (yoked to a rather second-rate story "The Tie") which state the case for the Old School Tie as well as is necessary. It is the merit of the Old School Tie—even that of the United Services College—to be—

> Ancient and unbribeable,
> By the virtue of its Name—
> Which, however oft I fell,
> Lashed me back into The Game.

Eton and Harrow could not have put it better. And that King was something more than satire and a scowl would appear from the circumstance—fortunate for posterity—that for some years Kipling was at pains to clip his contributions from the Indian periodicals, initial or sign them and post them to this same "King."

Kipling went straight from the United Services College, at the age of seventeen, to the post of assistant editor on the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, on the princely pay of six pounds ten a month. He served that paper for five years and was then transferred to the *Pioneer* at Allahabad. His period on the *Pioneer* was shorter and less congenial; after two years of it he conceived the idea of literature as a career and he quite rightly decided that writing in a big way involved an assault upon London. These "seven years hard" in India were in themselves so formative and produced so much of his reputation that they demand treatment in a separate section of this book; in this summary of his life they must for the moment take their place and be set

aside. But perhaps it is worth while even here to stress the point that they *were* only seven years—seven years in the life of a young man, an adolescent almost, between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four. Kipling *left* India at the age of twenty-four and for all practical purposes he never went back. (He made a very short visit in 1891 in the course of his world tour; nothing very notable came of it.) When therefore one calls to mind the gallery of grave and reverend seniors who have written endlessly about India, the men and women of talent and even genius who have devoted lifetimes to the study and exposition of that not uncomplicated country, it is surely an arresting thought that for half a century India was to the ordinary Englishman—as it still is to many—Kipling. This is a remarkable tribute to the brilliance and the mastery that painted this ineradicable picture. Yet it must be at all times borne in remembrance that Kipling's India was the impression—I had almost written the invention—of a young man between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four. At that age one has quick observation but few scruples, great assurance but little conscience, eager enthusiasms but a judgment—to say the least of it—immature.

"Hotly we stormed Valhalla." Indeed we did! There can be few more dramatic adventures in the history of our letters than the first assault of the twenty-four-year-old Kipling upon London—"short, sturdy, bullet-headed, with very sharp eyes behind his defensive glasses." The attack, as we should say in these latter days, was concentrated and successful. As to the concentration, Kipling's stay in London can be measured in terms of months—perhaps eighteen of them at most; and in that period he produced the series of stories in *Macmillan's* which became *Life's Handicap*, as well as two full-length books, *The Light that Failed* (The Book that Failed, as the spiteful called it) and *The Naulahka*. In addition he had sold himself to no less a person than W. E. Henley of the *Scots* (it became the *National*) *Observer* and

had written the contents of the volume called ***Barrack-room Ballads***, which included, besides the Ballads proper, such pieces as "The Bolivar," "The Clampherdown" and "The English Flag." No doubt some of this imposing list had been drafted beforehand; even making this allowance, the output was prodigious for the time involved. It is at any rate a prodigious amount of publication; the mere fact that this ambitious catalogue can be recorded indicates a success both rapid and complete.

The London of **1890** into which this new force so dramatically intruded is almost as difficult to recapture to-day as is the India from which it had emerged. Literary movements abounded, changing and merging with kaleidoscopic confusion, the Romantics, the Kailyarders, the Greenery-Yallery. In literary politics the situation resolved itself into a feud—at times amounting to the dimensions of a war—between the opposing camps of Henley's Young Men and the *Yellow Book;* which could also be expressed in terms of a rivalry between the Anglo-Saxon and the French schools. It is perhaps strange that Kipling, with his strongly Francophile predilections, threw in his lot unhesitatingly with the Anglo-Saxons; and yet perhaps it is not so strange. Kipling came from a practical environment where men of action were admired in preference to men of dalliance; the robust he-mannery of Henley "throwing a chest" was by so much more attractive than the slinking innuendoes and the curtained cynicisms of Wilde and Beardsley. Besides, Henley hated Gladstone. If we are to believe the contemporary poem "In Partibus," the new recruit made some trial of the *Yellow Book* camp—and disliked it. He wrote, borrowing a metre from their own most illustrious member—

> But I consort with long-haired things
>   In velvet collar-rolls
> Who talk about the Aims of Art
>   And "theories" and "goals"

And moo, and coo with women-folk
About their blessed souls.

In an incredibly short space of time the rivalry between the two camps developed into the brilliant boy Beardsley *versus* the brilliant boy Kipling; either might have described himself as "the rage of London." Fortunately for Henley's Young Men, Wilde—the opposing general—disgraced himself and fell; the *Yellow Book* school followed him into oblivion. Fortunately too for Kipling it was what Bernard Muddiman has well called "a short-winded age"; the great novel was in abeyance; the short story was in insatiable demand, and Kipling's short stories swept the Henley team to victory. He himself made a creditable if not an excellent impression; Frank Harris, then a king-maker in the literary world, while seeing him as an "ingenuous but not an impressive personality," was obliged to note the becoming simplicity of his demeanour, his freedom from pose and affectation (a rarity in London of the 'nineties), his readiness to yield to suggestion or amendment. The newcomer was not, however, prepared to carry this readiness too far; Harris sorrowfully adds that he was not prone to consider the opposite side of the question; "his mind seemed closed to any argument"; "he had the prejudices and opinions of a fourth-form schoolboy"; he was "a jingo with an extraordinary talent for language." Such was the conqueror and such the Valhalla he stormed; in a sense, a preposterous gang of poseurs and eccentrics subsisting on mutual admiration and dislike, yet formidable in its close-knit cliques and cabals and in its united foreignness to the young invader from India. How utterly lapsed is now that world and how complete was the invader's conquest may best perhaps be gathered from a recital of the best-sellers of 1890 under the head of "Fiction"; they were *Plain Tales from the Hills,* William Black's *Stand-Fast Craig-Royston,* Besant's *Armorel of Lyonnesse,* Hall-Caine's *Bondsman,* Maarten Maarten's *Sin of Joost Aveling,*

William Morris's *News from Nowhere* and Edwin Arnold's *Phra the Phoenician*. Which of these has survived?

Kipling was indeed more than a success during those London months in Villiers Street; for the only time in his life he became a craze—he even reached that apical condition of fame when offers of marriage from complete strangers poured in upon him. Viewed in the retrospect, his explosion into English letters is hard to account for; it is hard even to follow. He trailed no clouds of glory when he came; on the contrary, the omens had been positively depressing. In 1888 an admirer in India had sent some of his hero's work to England; he received the chilling reply from his first " contact " that it was " not up to the standard of the *Daily Telegraph*." Sir Ian Hamilton has recently told us how he took it on himself to send *The Mark of the Beast* (then under another title) to his brother for submission to Andrew Lang and William Sharp (" Fiona Macleod "); Lang found it " poisonous stuff " and Sharp, calling it a " detestable piece of work," prophesied that its author would die mad before thirty . . . . One thousand copies of *Plain Tales* had been sent from Calcutta to London; and in their covering letter Thacker Spink had made the modest boast that the work " should prove as popular as *Lays of Ind*." The trade subscribed sixteen copies though the book, on the credible authority of a member of their London office, " had been displayed in Paternoster Row from end to end and thence through London north, south, east and west." The first reviews were the work of hacks, and but for the *Saturday Review* which came to the rescue with a column notice, *Plain Tales* might have fallen dead. The trade's reception of *Departmental Ditties* was equally cold; the new author, one would have said, was doomed to egregious failure.

In the meantime Kipling, journeying to the storm of Valhalla by way of the United States of America, met with equally scant encouragement. *Harper's* snub has become a classic: " This firm is devoted to the publication of litera-

ture." The Bohemians in San Francisco made him a member but the secretary of the University Club of Philadelphia ignored a request for club privileges; and the only thing Kipling sold in America—on this visit—was a badly over-written interview with Mark Twain which went into the *New York Herald.* It is scarcely surprising that these experiences, together with the casual attitude of trans-Atlantic publishers in regard to copyright, gave Kipling an unfavourable opinion of the United States—a circumstance which was perhaps to have disastrous repercussions some six years later; nor would one have said that these rebuffs were a likely prelude to a *succes fou* in London. In London itself the skies were at first sufficiently grey; he captivated Henley but could make little of the still more puissant Frank Harris. (" A Mr. Frank Harris," says *Something of Myself,* getting some of its own back in that indefinite article, " whom I discovered to be the one human being I could on no terms get on with.") The stones were turned over but slowly; Robert Barr took him up in the newly starting—and now long defunct—*Idler;* the *World* interviewed him capably and entertainingly; *The Times* dug the Indian Stories out of limbo and gave them a column review. " The effect," says Lowell Thomas, " was as of an ice-jam on a river suddenly giving way." From that it was but a step to Professor Masson of Edinburgh waving a copy of Henley's *Observer* which contained " Danny Deever " and crying out " Here's literature, here's literature at last!" (One recalls a mob in the same cultured city demanding, " Whaur's your Wullie Shakespeare noo?" but this Home had come to stay.) Well indeed might the youthful conqueror dispatch the cryptic telegram to the family in India, " Genesis xlv. 9, 10, 13." The full quotation—it is astonishly apt—may be verified by those sufficiently interested; but the first of the three verses runs, " Haste ye and go up to my father and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph: God hath made me lord of all Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not."

So far, so good; but it was not long before literary London put the coping-stone on the newborn fame; Kipling was attacked—and attacked bitterly and viciously. It was to be long before he was as savagely assaulted again, if indeed he was ever again to savour that bitter-sweet compliment. That malicious perversion "The Book that Failed" has already been quoted; even yet one can hear in that the ring of delight, of triumphant rivalry, the disguised "Thank God he's struck a loser at last!" Francis Adams, a bitter and tragic young man—he was only three years Kipling's senior after all—let fly in the *Fortnightly;* a "little-brained second-rate journalist" with "sickening egotism and vanities"—these were no light words from a leading critic, and though Cyril Falls dismisses them as the "vicious rancour of the political controversialist" there was more to them than that. There was more too than a neatly turned epigram in the classical backhander of J. K. Stephens. "Will there ever come a season," he asked,

> When a boy's eccentric blunder
>   Shall not bring success to pass.
>
> When there stands a muzzled stripling
>   Mute beside a muzzled bore;
> When the Rudyards cease from Kipling
>   And the Haggards ride no more?

Poor Haggard, of course, comes in for it too; but one may ask whether the verses would have been written about Haggard alone. There is a viciousness here that springs from something more than mere dislike, mere literary disagreement; it springs from terror, terror of this new genius that was blowing the established names out of the market-place. Alas! It did not last. Kipling was to become ordinary. Kipling was to become accepted; the epoch of the 'nineties was itself doomed and with its tumult

and its shouting it was carried away on the wind of the years. The Kipling fever went with it; the fervour faded from the worship and the sting from the condemnation. Perhaps the very last time this note—the note, one might almost say, of jealousy—was sounded was, of all places, in *Punch*: it is to be found in a "Very Nearly Story," *How the Ruddykip Got His Great Big Side.* The skit is amusing (though the Just-So's were surely too easy meat for any self-respecting parodist) but at the same time it is leavened with the old authentic vitriol. How clearly one can still hear an echo of the panic of the 'nineties in the words with which Gosse closed his article in the *Century* in 1891: "Ah, yes, Mr. Kipling, go back to the Far East. Yours is not the talent to bear with patience the dry-rot of London or New York. Disappear, another Waring, and come back in ten years' time with a fresh and still more admirable budget of precious loot out of Wonderland." The *Far* East, note—and a ten-years' interval. Valhalla had indeed been shaken; it was never quite the same place again.

Kipling did not go back to the East; in "The Way that he Took," a now forgotten story which first appeared in the *Daily Express* in June of 1900, the South-African-War-nurse heroine enunciates as a maxim, "Never go back by the way you came." That maxim was Kipling's own; he never went back by the way he came; "never" he said himself "follow up a success." Quite certainly he would not have taken Gosse's advice; but in any case the pace had been too hot, the storming of Valhalla left him a casualty. His health broke down—small wonder—and he went off on a voyage to Italy, South Africa, Australia and home by India. The tour was a long one but we may assume that he protracted it no longer than was necessary, for he had a special reason to speed him back to London. He was to marry there—and did marry in January of 1892—Caroline Balestier, the sister of that Wolcott Balestier with whom he had collaborated (very unsatisfactorily) in *The Naulahka.* For during those hectic

months at Villiers Street a new influence—almost one would say a spell—had come into his life; the irresistible charm of the magic family—or so he seemed to find it—of Balestier. (They pronounced it in the American fashion, not the French—" Boll-*es teer*.") Once again, as in the case of his Indian apprenticeship, the results of this influence were so many and strange and so affected his repute that the story must be kept in detail for a separate chapter; but perhaps nothing in Kipling's life was so much a turning-point, so worthy of mark with a red letter, as the day when a young American, the London representative of a publishing firm, wrote to him proposing a meeting and perhaps a partnership in writing. This was Wolcott Balestier who enthralled and enchanted Kipling for reasons which no one has ever been able to discover. There must have been magic indeed in these Balestiers; Kipling was enslaved by Wolcott; he married the sister Caroline; he had the row of his life with the other brother, Beatty; Balestier echoes and Balestier repercussions go with him to his grave.

Meanwhile, in this brief summary of Kipling's life, it will suffice to say that they took him to America for four years—from 1892 to 1896—to the State of Vermont; and they took him out of it. By a curious fate Kipling fled to Vermont for refuge and fled *from* it, again for refuge; and the story of the years between is, by fate's irony, one he might have devised and delighted in himself. The story is at worst tragi-comedy (though Kipling could hardly have enjoyed its humour) but it had as postscript perhaps the grimmest passage in his life. The flight from America in 1896 rendered necessary a visit to New York early in 1899; it was a bitter winter; Kipling caught cold on the boat; it turned to pneumonia. Simultaneously his two little daughters contracted measles—again with the gravest complications; all three lay deadly ill together, Kipling himself in the now-vanished Grenoble Hotel in New York, and the two little girls at the house of a friend on East 25th Street. Kipling went to death's

door and the world hung waiting for tidings—much as that newspaper office hung waiting on the night when the Man Who would Be King came into it. Kipling's illness was the front-page news of the day; in London, at a party attended by Arnold Bennett, they sang God Save Kipling instead of God Save the Queen; and among the many who sent distinguished and solicitous inquiries was the Kaiser. When the crisis was over it was found that Kipling had recovered and his younger daughter Elsie had recovered; but his elder daughter, the six-year-old Josephine, was dead. So far as one may read between the lines his privacy complex laid down, she was the love of her father's life; sapphire-blue eyes, hair of the true gold *but* dark brows and lashes—surely a beauty was lost to the world when death carried Taffimai away ungrown! According to one account, her father kept her ashes in a porphyry urn; no urn, porphyry or otherwise, was necessary to keep her memory alive for it lived in his heart to the end of his days. " For far—oh very far behind, So far she cannot call to him, Comes Tegumai alone to find The daughter that was all to him."

The luck, so long favouring, had turned at last with a vengeance. Kipling fled America for the second time and came back to England bringing (they said) a strong American accent; even on a previous visit his " American inflection," according to a reporter of the *London Review,* had " surprised a good many people." Now he brought also the bitterness of great disappointment and the stupefaction of tragedy. The American period had been rich in writing—it covers *Many Inventions*, both *Jungle Books*, *The Seven Seas*, *Captains Courageous* and *The Day's Work;* it had been not less rich in experience and the Kipling who sought the shelter of England in 1899 was a different man from the Kipling who had stepped out of the church in Langham Place with his bride on his arm and had taken boat for Japan. Nor was England the same England; great events were casting shadows which presently became substance; the Boer War,

long rumbling in frustration, at length blew off the kettle-lid and broke out. Kipling had already made more than one visit to South Africa; he went back there to help with the war. He wrote "The Absent-minded Beggar" to raise subscriptions for the *Daily Mail* campaign—one of the first newspaper stunts since the *New York Herald* sent out Stanley; it raised a quarter of a million. He anchored in Bloemfontein to edit a paper for the troops. He threw himself again into South Africa, into the war, into "Missis Victorier's Sons." But the curse would not lift, the luck refused to redeem itself. For the first time Kipling, who had written so much about warfare, saw war for himself; and it was not as it had seemed on the battlements of Fort Amara or in the mess quarters at Jutogh. The panache of Mulvaney or Captain Crook O'Neill was not, it seemed, war's only requisite. Nor did "we" always win. The South African War never went really well; and for a time it went very badly indeed. It indicated with brutal clarity that the Bobby Wickses and the Brushwood Boys were less good, even at their own business, than Kipling had supposed. It was a gloomy time, no sort of cure or even palliative for a period of personal disaster.

The Boer War ended and with it, it seemed for the moment, everything that Kipling had to say. With it too, in a sense, comes to an end the interesting period of Kipling's life; Diego Valdez, High Admiral of Spain, was now ensconced in office—with all its attendant disillusions. Rudyard Kipling was established, he had a position, there was no more struggle. He was brother now to a prince but what of the companion to a beggar? Desperately English, his contacts now were squire and parson; there were no more meetings with significant loafers in railway trains in the red dust of Rajputana; he drank no longer beer in a nullah with Private Ortheris but port in the drawing-room with Colonel Blimp. He travelled again—and widely—but henceforward he encountered magnates in the first-class

smoking-room; no bibulous engineers came on deck in their pyjamas to tell of the Lang Men o' Larut; no dubious German bagmen sweated through tales of Bertrans and Bimis and Reingelders. It may or may not be more blessed to travel than to arrive; but it is more interesting and the traveller is better fun.

Now this began in **1902** after the Boer War and Kipling had still four-and-thirty years to live and a second and still more terrible—and in some ways still more disillusioning—war to survive. In the earlier part of this period one sees him somewhat as a hermit crab in search of a shell—perhaps he had been one ever since his marriage; for a time he devoted himself to the discovery of thicker and thicker shells in more and more recondite corners. The victorious drums and trumpets of Valhalla had never again resounded; the assault on America had been a dismal failure—worse than that, a ludicrous failure. For a time he flirted strongly with South Africa where he wintered year after year, for his illness in New York had left him in no state to face a series of English Decembers. He became the terror and bugbear of all ship's officers on the Union Castle Line; a vast establishment was carried out there each October which with each October seemed more and more inclined to own the ship. But South Africa offered no permanent refuge either. There was always France, which he loved and where his name stood always exceedingly high; but for some reason no full-scale attack on France was ever launched. It remained to fall back on "the exploration of my amazing England," to rediscover it historically and geographically and spiritually and to announce these discoveries in print; and if the ghosts of Mahbub Ali and Daniel Dravot grinned sometimes in derision, the ghost of Kim's Lama, pointing to a rediscovered River, would smile approval. Once the decision was made, once the hermit crab assumed his final shell, once England was established as the final refuge, Kipling never swerved or hesitated again. The

song on thy bugles blown, England (as his old master had it) was heard with no discordant note; there were times indeed when he came singing the song on thy bugles blown, Sussex, when one could fain have shaken him.

The first shell on the beaches of England which the hermit crab thought suitable was—somewhat unoriginally—Torquay; but here the Dismal House obtruded itself with its unfriendly welcome and in real life the House Surgeon could not cure it. The house and its trouble lay long years in Kipling's mind before it cleared itself away in the form of a story; one pays for being the descendant of a long line of Macdonalds blessed—or is it cursed?—with the gift of seeing. The daemon of the place, whatever it was, proved presently insupportable, so a move was made to Rottingdean where the clans of Baldwin and Burne-Jones were already gathered; the Kiplings arrived there just in time to celebrate a double occasion, the birth of son John and the election of his father to the Athenaeum as a "distinguished person without ballot." It was in the Burne-Jones house, lent for the occasion, that the former of these events took place and Kipling, never at a loss for the apt Biblical quotation, wrote in the visitors' book, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John." For a time Rottingdean served—long enough at least to persuade Kipling that Sussex was indeed the place—Sussex where "the dead, twelve-coffin deep, clutch hold of my wheels at every turn"; but presently the Brighton trippers proved as fatal as the devils of Torquay. If less depressing, they were more persistent; the harassed occupants of "The Elms" would frequently find a knot of sightseers at its white gate, many of them kneeling not in worship but in a determined endeavour to peer through the slit in the defensive boards which covered it; it was no uncommon thing for the mistress of the house to have to beg them to rise and allow her to enter. This was certainly putting too great a strain on any reasonable privacy complex; the hermit crab retired

to a still deeper cranny. One could now own such a thing as a "Locomobile" which could carry one beyond the range of the tripper, for whom the bus and the charabanc had not yet dawned. Kipling's carried him to Bateman's at Burwash (one pronounces it "Burr'sh") and there at last he settled down for the duration of his life, "a spare brown little man roaming the lanes with spectacles clamped on his nose and a dog at his heels"; still dodging the insatiable trippers, clenching his teeth at the sound of their view-holloa and "diving for cover on the Downs." In the 1914-18 war he emerged from this seclusion as the official writer-up (along with Ian Hay) of the new armed forces of the Crown—a task which he carried out adequately if with less than his ancient fire. The war struck him to earth when John was lost at Loos. Thereafter he appeared sometimes in London where a fellow-guest at one of Lady Colefax's luncheons found him "exceedingly dogmatic and impatient of any disagreement with his views." In 1923 he was elected Lord Rector of St. Andrew's University in succession to Barrie and gave the students a fine and unusually witty (for Kipling) speech on the independence of owning oneself; in the Press photograph of the Rectorial group he has a shrivelled far-off absent look; there may be seen with him Sir John Bland-Sutton who was to be with him again in his last illness. He was moving now far more with doctors and far less with soldiers; his stories began to turn less on the brisk activities of the body and more upon the moonlit adventures of the mind. He developed an ulcer of the stomach; it perforated and turned to peritonitis; he was taken gravely ill in a London hotel on the night of the 12th of January 1936 and very early on the morning of the 18th—on the forty-fourth anniversary of his wedding—he went. He was cremated at Golders Green as secretly as he had been married in Langham Place, after hours and attended only by a solicitor, one friend, the Superintendent of the Crematorium and the "Special Correspondent" of the *Daily*

Telegraph: this furtive and inconspicuous cortege had been immediately preceded by a noisy gathering of Communists cremating Shapurji Saklatvala to the strains of the Red Flag. What remained of Kipling was buried in Westminster Abbey, close to Thomas Hardy and Dickens and under the stony stare of Longfellow and Dryden. One may perhaps imagine a heavily moustached and spectacled ghost hovering in the dusk of Poets' Corner and quoting to itself with melancholy satisfaction, "Lord ha' mercy on me, this is none of I!"

Yet that ghost after all would know itself for a tragic ghost—one that would willingly have exchanged the glory of Poets' Corner for a humbler resting-place on condition that a fair-haired girl with dark lashes, and a young man with Caroline's narrow head and quick dark eyes might have come there sometimes with flowers. Kipling's life is in most ways an astonishing success; in this one way it is a tragic failure. All his life he was devoted to children, and two of his own three children were taken from him; Josephine in New York, John at Loos. It had been his aim and ambition to give them a happy childhood—so very different from his own—and in that he so far succeeded; but he could not contend for them against their fatal destinies. Worse; in the case of John at least he had the dreadful knowledge that he was himself partly to blame. John was short-sighted like his father, he had varicose veins, he need not have been a soldier; but Kipling had been so soldier-possessed, had moved so closely with Roberts in his campaign for universal service, that neither father nor son was left with any honourable retreat. That must have been a grim thought for Kipling during many dark hours between 1915 and 1936. Surprise has sometimes been expressed that Kipling died without a title and stories of royal displeasure and aversion have been invented to account for it. They *are* inventions; George V, Edward VIII and George VI were his personal friends and his claims may well have been consider-

ed more than once. But—a sonless man has no use for titles.

Kipling's own version of his life was a generous conviction that he had been from first to last lucky; that he was dealt a series of good cards which he had only to lay face upwards on the table. It is a modest estimate and does justice to his sense of guidance from without, but it does not square very well with the facts. If he did not sometimes conjure a card out of his own sleeve, he was at least remarkably quick in picking up those that fell from the dealer, and as quick in translating their message into action. He saw, one would have said, into the dealer's mind: at times the card seemed played before it was dealt. In 1885 one would have sworn him established in India for a lifetime. In 1891 one would have wagered large sums that his career lay as a writer in London. By 1894 he had become so Americanized that he horrified his family and friends when he visited England. In 1902 one might have said, "South Africa has him." Yet all these were but stages; none of them could hold him; from one to the other he went—cutting painters, burning his boats, never going back by the way that he came. He may have been dealt an excellent and varied hand; he certainly played it boldly.

III

"KUPPELEEN SAHIB"

"By the Bull that Bought me!"

Mowgli

It is impossible to think of Kipling without thinking of Kipling in India; indeed many of his admirers have never to this day got beyond that bustling, sunlit figure. Perhaps India was the one place (with the possible exception of

France of which he has written but meagrely) where he felt completely at home. In Vermont he had infinite good intention, he acquired the patois, he soaked in the local colour; but he felt himself among foreigners. South Africa was permanently shadowed by the cloud of that Boer War which had shaken so many hitherto unquestioned axioms. Sussex was comfortable and restorative, but the Song of Sussex becomes at times a little shrill and the hymn of its praise determined to the verge of protestation. But in India there was accord. At the time of his birth in Bombay, his mother had a long and difficult confinement and there is a story that it was not until one of his father's clerks sacrificed a kid in the local temple that the tarrying infant at last condescended to appear. Kipling felt—and liked to feel—that he had been "bought into India," and that in moving towards India he moved towards home. Be that as it may, he fitted into India as the Chapins into Friar's Pardon.

The India which received this excited and exciting young man, seventeen years of age and fresh from the study he had shared with Turkey and Stalky, was an alluring temptress; heady and potent was the cup she held out to him. Quiescent, as it seemed, these many years, she was stirring now and stretching her dark arms and throwing her dark eyes around her in quest of mischief. When Kipling was born in Bombay, the Mutiny with all its horrors was but eight years over; men still spoke of "Clemency" Canning with a sneer on the soubriquet; the country lay idle in the curious clouded hush that follows in the wake of cyclones. That hideous and elemental explosion had drained India, as it seemed, of her capacity for violence; for a couple of decades the ship of state rocked uneasily on the slowly subsiding sea. There were some lurid passages—the Orissa famine of 1866, the Mayo assassination of 1872; but in the main the age was tranquil. Deceptively so; for although the interval between Kipling's departure from India and his

return to it was no more than thirteen years of actual time, in effect it was immeasurable; though it seemed an epoch of humdrum monotony, it was in fact pregnant and decisive. The India of 1882 was a century away from the India of 1862; the era of the "Sepoys" and the "Mangal Pandies" was now as remote as Clive or the Begums of Oudh. Measured in terms of months and days, the time had been short but in fact a revolution had taken place.

It is a little difficult to think oneself back into that bright hopeful mildly adventurous India of 1882. Ripon was in the dead centre of his Viceroyalty; beginning perhaps to doubt whether the Liberal programme for India was altogether as feasible or expedient as it had appeared when he had talked it over with Gladstone. He still persevered with it, however, and for this he was extolled in one camp and vilified in the other. The Afghan wars were over for the time being; the Afghan question appeared—or one could persuade oneself that it appeared—settled once for all. Men still talked of the Russian menace, however, and cast uneasy eyes towards the North-west Frontier—wishing they knew exactly where it was. There was no North-east Frontier; Thibaw, fortified by strong liquor and the counsels of Supiyawlat, still reigned in Upper Burma; the Japanese were a curious race emerging from a medieval twilight, amusingly—and at times prettily—aping the ways and manners of the West. There were some railways, a few good or goodish roads and a great deal of riding and driving about. The normal European stood a fair chance of catching cholera and a much better one of enteric; he suffered from vaguely described "fevers" which he did not allow to interfere with either the morning's office or the evening's dinner-party—until one of them suddenly became much worse and swiftly carried him off. Then, as now, there were "the Hills"; then, as now, there were a thousand isolated up-country stations, little colonies of chance-assembled and uncongenial souls which occasionally loved, occasionally

hated and almost constantly irritated one another.

The "fevers" which decimated the circle at the Club were from time to time magnified into national holocausts. Famine, in those days, was still a grim reality, and an unsolved problem. It was not so long since that unpleasant affair in Orissa, when, because nothing and no one was ready, a quarter of the population of that unhappy province perished miserably, and its memory had not been expunged by the contrary affair in Behar when six million pounds were over-enthusiastically spent and nearly a million tons of unwanted grain were dumped upon the astounded inhabitants. General Strachey's Commission had just concluded its labours and issued its report; the view put forward in *Departmental Ditties* that all was even yet not wholly well was by no means confined to Kipling. But—Afghan and Frontier wars, famine, pestilence and sudden death, sinister greycoats on the Oxus and Mrs. Hauksbee alive and accessible at the Club—here was richness for the young editor of the United Services College Magazine.

Kipling saw and sprang to Afghanistan—as, when the chance came under the less liberally-minded Dufferin, he sprang to Lungtungpen, Boh da Thone and Mandalay. He observed, docketed and recorded General Strachey and his famine investigators. He shook hands with pestilence and sudden death and made a grimacing bogy of the Russian greycoats. He sized up Mrs. Hauksbee. But, besides all these, there was something going on that Kipling did not see—or if he did, he said no word of it. This was the revolution in India.

For some time after the assumption of government by the Crown, the people of India were content to ask merely for a better—or at any rate for a different—education. But presently—perhaps as a result of the Government's eager accession to these requests—there began to appear quite a new element in Indian life, an element which demanded not merely educational advance but political advance also. This

element was not, as might have been expected, made up of the ruling classes—the Princes or Zamindars or the great warrior clans; on the contrary it consisted largely of gentlemen in black coats whose profession was the hitherto unregarded one of *vakil* or lawyer. Peace, prosperity and swords beaten into ploughshares had, in fact, as usual produced a middle class, a bourgeoisie—a thing hitherto entirely unknown in the Indian sociology. These men had studied the windy periods of Burke; they had read Hobbes and Mill and Locke; they had marked with some interest the career of the Chartists and the history of that curious "freedom" ferment which convulsed all Europe in the later 'forties. They were at first a little ludicrous; they combined insolence with obsequiousness in a mixture which it was difficult to take seriously; they spoke and wrote in a jargon of Johnsonese and a curious off-English of their own. They were in a sense comic figures; but it was a mistake to laugh at them; they were the first drops of a thunderstorm, the first echo of an approaching army. They started newspapers, at first critical and then vituperative; and though these were often no more than the ephemeral and contemptible products of disgruntled students and failed as rapidly as they were begun, they produced a cumulative effect. Already, by 1878, Lord Lytton had found it necessary to muzzle them by a Vernacular Press Act which laid them open to Government censorship. (It was dutifully repealed by Lord Ripon, but it came back.) The hubbub of criticism rose; India hummed with it as her hill sholas hummed with cicalas or her paddy-fields with frogs. It became a voice; it became the voice of something quite new—of the Indian nation. There was no such thing as an Indian nation—politically speaking—when little Rudyard Kipling sailed for home and the House of Sorrows; there was something more than the embryo of one when he came back. And the strange thing is that he did not see the change.

And yet the indications were clear; the red light blazed.

In the year after his return to India one of those incidents occurred in the light of which passions are fired and opponents are displayed to one another. An unimportant and quite sensible Bill—called, from its sponsor, the Ilbert Bill—was introduced into the Legislature. Its purpose was to remove the anomaly by which Europeans could be tried by a judge or magistrate of their own race but not by an Indian of similar rank. Indians had been, in accordance with the expressed wish of the Crown, increasingly enrolled in the public services; some of them rose high in the judiciary; the discrimination between these and their European colleagues was manifestly unjust. The Presidency Magistrate in Calcutta, an Indian functioning under a special Act, could try Europeans; why not an Indian magistrate elsewhere? The Bill was a thing of minor importance and might well have passed unnoticed; but to certain classes Lytton was suspect, everything he did was wrong and here seemed an excellent stick wherewith to beat the dog. A tremendous and wholly disproportionate agitation was raised—engineered largely by the tea and indigo planters, never a very progressive or liberal-minded community. Compromise ensued, the Bill was modified with the usual result—the Europeans were but little assuaged and the Indians were infuriated by what they took, not altogether unjustifiably, as a slight on the integrity of their race. Of all this young Kuppeleen Sahib was well aware; he was in the thick of it and not the least biased spectator—as readers of *Something of Myself* will have noted. But still he did not see what it meant; he did not see the Ilbert Bill leading directly to the Indian National Congress, the Indian National Congress leading directly to—what?

Attracted perhaps by the great moon of Gladstone on the other side of the world, the tide of Indian discontent and dissatisfaction and criticism rose and rose. And at the end of 1885, when Kipling had been three years with the *Civil and Military Gazette*, a strange thing happened. An ex-Civil Servant, an Englishman, Allan Octavian Hume, founded a new

body, the Indian National Congress. It stated its aims modestly as the establishment of representative government; it thought it might perhaps become " an Indian Parliament." It laid down three fundamental principles—the fusion of all elements in the population, the regeneration of the nation (it assumed the existence of a nation) and—this is surely rather pathetic—consolidation of the union between Great Britain and India. Nobody paid very much attention to it and Kuppeleen Sahib no more than others; one laughed at the ridiculous little creature and patronized it with insulting nicknames; one prophesied that its first session would be its last. But its first session was not its last.

For this great moment—not perhaps the birth of Indian Nationalism but the first attempt to handle it in the light of day—Kipling arrived pat. But at the moment Dufferin was concluding the triumphant annexation of Burma and Kipling's eyes were in Mandalay not Poona.

Dufferin, of course, was the type Kipling hero. He was an idol who well merited worship apart from—perhaps in spite of—his easily won laurels on the Upper Irrawaddy. Socially he was a professional charmer who conquered without effort and without chicanery. In the field of self-government he succeeded in doing very much what Ripon would have done without exciting half the rancour or hysteria, without attracting to himself either the undesirable abuse of the Europeans or the equally undesirable applause of the Indians; and if he were indebted to fortune in Afghanistan, he won deservedly in Burma by virtue of the personal resolution with which he took charge there and terminated the endless vacillations of the Bengal Government. But—Dufferin succeeding to Ripon; surely this was Tallantire succeeding to Grish Chunder De; and for Kipling, dazzled by this vision of strength and skill, the moral was that Tallantire—all the Tallantires—must be right. To captivate him finally, Dufferin made capital out of the Afghan troubles to increase the army in India by ten thousand British and twenty thousand Indian troops, and

already there was no surer way to Kipling's heart than by way of soldiers. Yet perhaps it was a pity for Kipling that he came under Dufferin's viceroyalty just when he did; something less of a solo in magnificence might have been better for his sense of values.

Such was the background against which Kipling worked out his seven years' hard in India; from this superb facade let us descend to a closer survey of Kuppeleen Sahib himself. Here was a young man with two great and ready-made advantages; he arrived in India at one of her most romantic and exciting epochs and he found the way made smooth for him in advance. In 1872 Lockwood Kipling had been transferred from Bombay to Lahore, nominally as Curator of the Museum but really to found and act as first Principal of the new Mayo School of Art. No better choice could have been made; Lockwood Kipling was the miracle-worker who had been "turning the artisans of Bombay into artists"; he was a man of parts with an encyclopaedic knowledge of many aspects of Indian life. The bald grey-bearded version of his son Rudyard who looks out at us from his contemporary photographs—with the alert bat-eared Vixen always in the foreground—had clearly built himself up, in the interval between 1872 and 1882, a position which depended more on his personal attributes (and those of his beautiful, clear-headed and vivacious wife) than on the status of his appointment in the Civil List. Despite the rigidities of the Order of Precedence in India, it has always been possible for this to happen; Mr. A., holding, let us say, the post of Director of Municipal Tramways, is but little known, does not belong to the major and more exclusive club, and is on the garden-party list—as opposed to the dinner list—at Government House. Mr. B., his successor, by some unmentioned alchemy, reverses this position and is received everywhere on terms with brigadier-generals and secretaries to the Provincial Governments. In time he gives place to Mr. C., who, by an equally tacit and accepted understanding, reverts at once

to the strictly official status of Mr. A. Lockwood Kipling, as Curator of the Lahore Museum, had no very lofty official standing; but quite evidently he had arrived unofficially at the position of our imaginary Mr. B. Lord Dufferin himself was something of a family friend and in Simla the Kiplings dined often at Viceregal Lodge on the more informal—and therefore more exclusive—occasions. Young Rudyard's closest friends in Simla were Ian Hamilton, Lord Russell and Walter Lawrence—all very "Government House" indeed. There were doubtless many who looked upon these promotions with small favour; but their spleen was impotent—the Kiplings were securely and permanently entrenched.

All this was natural; Lockwood Kipling was a man of remarkable personality and attainments with the tact and wisdom to turn these to the best advantage; his wife had both beauty and brains—a combination rare anywhere and in India scarcely ever seen. She was also, in the hot weather, the Simla correspondent of various Indian newspapers and was therefore a person worth cultivating, whose caprice could immortalize a state ball toilette or consign it to oblivion. The social position taken by his parents was not only their natural due; it was also highly advantageous for young Rudyard, disembarking on the shores of India more than a trifle callow and crude. On the other hand, the nature of his work at the office of the *Civil and Military Gazette* not only introduced him to quite a different layer of society but made him free—and indeed obliged—to investigate all the layers there were. He thus had a foot in both camps and it is probable that the writings of Rudyard the son of Lockwood attracted more attention in distinguished circles than would those of an obscure young man on the staff of the *Gazette* who signed himself "The Subaltern" or "The Reveller" or "The Centurion" or "Outis" or "Smith."

Yet another advantage accrued to young Kipling from his position on the staff of the *Gazette;* copy of reasonably high standard was—as ever in India—none too plentiful; it was

therefore a moral certainty that whatever he wrote would be published. There are few more stimulating incentives to the young and aspiring author. Kipling would of course have written whether there were a prospect of publication or not; it was in his blood and must out. But without the assurance that his tales would appear in print and would be read—more or less—by the citizens, he would probably have written much more for the family, much less for the world. To be sure of publication; to be sure that one's work would be read and noticed and criticized: how many writers of seventeen to twenty would give ten years' royalties for these assurances? They fell to Kipling like fruit dropping from a tree. And perhaps they were responsible for the birth and development of a certain unpleasing cockiness—there is no other word for it—in his work; that bouncing approach which George Moore was later to describe as "I know a trick worth two of that" and the *American Bookman*, more briefly and pungently, as "Attention—damn your eyes!"

This last might have been still more ebullient but for the established home at Bikaneer House—so called in derision because the State of Bikaneer consists largely of deserts and Lockwood Kipling, dreading the malarial mosquito, refused to have a watered garden. That was quite evidently a happy home; and its happiness was the safer because it rested not on the shifting sands of mutual admiration but on the firm rock of intelligent mutual criticism. Kipling himself maintains that he heeded then no critics save his father and mother nor heeded any other so long as they lived; they criticized him freely—at times, it would appear, mercilessly; "There's no mother in poetry, my dear"—and he had the wisdom to take it in good part and profit thereby. To the parental strictures might be added the sisterly; in the early Indian days "Ruddy" and "Trix" worked closely together; it would be interesting to know how much of *Departmental Ditties* was first strung together by Trix or how much of the recondite femininity of *Plain Tales* sprang from that shrewd judg-

ment and delicate observation which were afterwards to blossom in the *Pinchbeck Goddess.* "The best dancer in the Punjab," too, should have known something about it. The call would sound, "Ho, Infant! give me pen and paper, genius is burning!" But when the final casting had dropped from the forge of genius, the acetylene flame of the Infant's criticism came into play. Clearly, in such a home the most uppish young man could get away with only a limited amount of knowingness, side, "Attention — damn your eyes," or tricks worth two of the family's. And the home bungalow performed yet another and even more valuable service; it set against the lure of the club and its ladies' annexe the solid, obvious, incontestable treasure of itself. It showed—and Kipling had the sense to realize it—that there are few things pleasanter than a nice family living together in a nice home, however acutely such expressions may nauseate the cynic. It is not to be wondered at that he won the reputation of being an entirely domesticated young man, always ready to stay at home of an evening and to find the little sister—who had come out to India at fifteen and a half—sufficiently diverting company. Beside such an anchorage the troubled waters of adultery must seem at best unattractive; and even the warm swimming-pool of the typical "station affair" hardly worth diving into. Kipling himself realized it; between the lines of the Simla stories one reads his calm certainty that he held something better than many Hauksbees.

On the other hand it is possible that this pleasant and contented stable was in part at least responsible for that singular blindness in the young Kipling towards the momentous events that were taking place in his newly recovered India. Judicious and sympathetic as Lockwood Kipling was, one can without much difficulty surmise what his comment would have been on a news item relating to the founding of the Indian National Congress. It was the comment of others wiser and greater than he. Nor was it in any sense unnatural;

those who have fought their way to a place of social and economic certainty are almost obliged to believe in the persistence of the conditions which have given that place its value. They are almost obliged to turn an incredulous eye on any novelty which threatens that value, to pooh-pooh it, to belittle it, to pretend that it does not exist or, if it exists, cannot last. Bikaneer House was built on a geological formation of which the strata were clearly defined; there were "Sahibs" and there were "natives"—the vast agricultural illiterate peasant population of India. (It is worth remembering that Kipling's grandfather, the Wesleyan minister of Pickering, would have called these latter simply "blacks.") Both these strata were very thick and durable—the "natives" by strength of numbers and the "Sahibs" by superior excellence. Between these massive beds of rock—as it were between the upper and the nether millstones—were some minor strata rather painfully compressed; a number of persons of white or whitish extraction who were manifestly not "Sahibs"; the "Sepoys" who were "natives" altered into semi-sahibs by the strange alchemy of service under British officers; and that class which Rudyard Kipling himself described as the "university-trained hybrid" and which we have called, a little above, the newly emerging middle class of India. In regard to the second and third of those minor strata there was some slight confusion of thought; for the "Sepoy" was a magnificent fellow because he had been instructed by British officers; the "university-trained hybrid" on the other hand was laughable or pestilential (according to taste) because he had been instructed by British professors. This did not make sense, but then it was never asked to make sense; it was accepted as axiomatic and exempted from critical survey. There was a further theory that the substratum of "hybrids," though disagreeable and unpleasant, was unreal and therefore negligible; the "real Indian," the villager, the petty cultivator, the ryot, was on the other hand an excellent fellow. As the "real Indians"

outnumbered the "hybrids" by some millions to one, the latter, it might be said, hardly mattered—a fortunate circumstance as they were in the main a gang of seditionists, malcontents and shams. For the good reason that his whole household, scheme of things and system of values were based on this geological foundation, Lockwood Kipling must have subscribed to this theory of the cosmos and by revered example, he must have inculcated the same beliefs in his son. It is a creed that dies hard; a great many people subscribe to the self-same nonsense to-day. Kipling *pere* had the excuse that he was bound to believe it; otherwise his whole position was sapped, undermined and enfiladed. There was less excuse for Kipling *fils* with his position yet to make.

For young Rudyard Kipling, then, the "real Indian" was the sepoy or the villager or the petty artisan or the vocational casteman or the tramp. For that body of brains which was slowly evolving the concept of an Indian nation, based on weird analogies from Burke, Parnell or Garibaldi—for these he had only a lively contempt. It is not easy to find in any of his writings the words "National Congress"; they receive most attention in a story called "The Enlightenments of Pagett, M.P.," which Gosse called "a very valuable paper"; it can be found only in the Outward Bound Edition of *In Black and White* or in the *Contemporary Review* for September, 1890. Pagett was characteristically enthusiastic about the "National Congress Movement." Under the aegis of Orde, I.C.S., Indian after Indian is brought forward to show he has never heard of this "Movement" or distrusts or disregards it, while that Reggie Burke (of the Sind and Sialkote Bank) who wrestled with the angular and tiresome Riley contributes the oracular remark that "this kind of agitation is anything but wholesome for the country." No doubt Orde could have staged such a *durbar* for the benefit of the persevering Pagett, and it is more than credible that Reggie Burke (being Reggie Burke and in 1890) would have expressed himself as quoted; but even in 1890 Orde must have hand-

picked his Indians very carefully. Quite certainly he had left unsampled his higher-grade revenue officials, his subordinate magistracy and his local Bar Association. The interest for ourselves is in the ostrich Rudyard, son of the ostrich Lockwood, and contemporary with a great many ostriches with less excuse than either of them. The National Congress Movement was rather a frightening affair; therefore it must be played down, ignored, glossed, ridiculed; it must be shown that the "real Indians" had nothing to do with it. "The Enlightenments of Pagett, M.P.," properly viewed in perspective, will enlighten others besides Pagett.

There is evidence too that Rudyard Kipling had ample opportunity for a more realistic appreciation of what was going on. That chamber on the city wall where Lalun entertained the unreliable Wali Dad is so coloured with Kipling's notion of what he thought such a chamber should have been that it becomes preposterous; yet it had its prototypes all over Lahore and every other city, and in them these new ferments and unrests and aspirations were being canvassed and discussed. Kipling must have known of them; his position on the *Civil and Military* could have made him free of their doorways, guarded or camouflaged as these might be to the official; but there is no evidence that he penetrated into them with any interest or understanding. Outside Lalun's chamber the pointers were more openly displayed. There was Ripon's liberalized—not very lavishly, perhaps, but still liberalized—legislature. There were the birth-pangs and infantile outcries of all those "local bodies" which were to be, over the next half-century, so strangely unsuccessful and disappointing. There was the vernacular Press and the vernacular presses—here to-day and gone to-morrow. Nothing—or very little—of all these is to be found in Kipling's Indian writings. Either they did not interest him or he preferred to join the ostriches. True, there is one story about the Legislature; but Tods' Amendment was not concerned with the Vernacular Press Act or the Arms Act or the

Ilbert Bill; it was a purely agricultural affair, a question of peasant tenures. It affected, therefore, the "real Indians" with whom the Infant Tods concerned himself; the predilection was pardonable in the Infant Tods, but the Infant Kipling should have grown up

He did not grow up—then or later; of the hopeless instability of the existing situation and the amazing developments that might lie before India he had no perception; any notion of an Indian India was beyond him. A half-serious vision of India's future does appear, in parenthesis, in the story called "His Private Honour"; this reborn India centres round a "territorial army" recruited from England and based on—and breeding in—a Kashmir commandeered from its rulers for the purpcse. It is an "independent" but a "colonized" India. Except as the potential mothers of a "second fighting-line of Eurasians" (*seu quid ineptius*!) there is no place in the scheme for the people of the country. This "Dream of India" is not of course to be taken too seriously; yet its mere existence does illustrate—and somewhat startlingly—the limitations of Kipling's outlook at the time.

And what was he like, this young Kipling whose luxuriant whiskers—at seventeen—so dismayed the fond but critical mother who met him on his arrival? Luxuriant generally, perhaps; he was noisy and jovial; imbued with a driving inquisitve curiosity; bursting with things to say. He sparkled with wit; there is a story that even when he was given an anaesthetic for the removal of a Delhi sore from his face, his conversation was so brilliant that the operating surgeon was hard put to it to attend to his work. He was at all times full of a roaring enthusiasm which was likely to try severely—and did try severely—those pale desiccated Anglo-Indians among whom his lines were now cast. Few things are more terrible than enthusiasm at three in the afternoon of an Indian September; few colleagues are more repulsive to the *Kwa-hai* of twenty years' standing than the colleague who is bursting

with ideas. Those who have borne the burden and heat of the day for the span of a generation in India have enough to do to keep things going, to ensure that the wheels continue to turn, that the vehicle progresses in the straight appointed line; they have little time or energy to expend upon juniors who desire that the vehicle should alter its direction or pace or even leave the ground altogether and become airborne. Hence snubbing, sometimes bitter and hard snubbing, for the over-enthusiastic junior. In Kipling's case the fates had provided a particularly efficient check on the over-eager; there can have been few more powerful dampers, even in the East, than Stephen Wheeler, his first chief on the *C.M.G.* Wheeler's notion of a compliment was a grudging, "Huh! *You*'re a clever pup!" and he met the more decorative and embroidered reportage with "*That's* a lie!" By such brutalities as these the normal junior is variously affected. If he be lonely, homesick, wondering whether in coming to this outlandish place he has not made the mistake of his life, he may be turned by snubbery to sulks, the solitary cell or even—it has happened—suicide. Rudyard Kipling was none of these things. He was at home and very happily at home; and though the parents might and did criticize, he had the assurance that, in the face of really serious opposition, the family would become a phalanx. And then, who cared for the opposition? He did not therefore turn to sulks or suicide; he was more likely to turn—and he did in fact turn—to impudence. He was quite certain of the major benefits of life; his own pony and trap, his own servant, his own private writing-room with his own version of "Keep out!" painted on the partition wall, and—crowning glory—his own "confidential" office-box. If the Father and Mother approved, then the writing was good and the citizens —be they club members or merely his fellow-men on the paper—might sing their disagreement to the moon. If the Father and Mother approved, then one could dogmatize, lay down the law, "attention-damn-your-eyes" to one's heart's

content. It is easy to say churlishly that the Father and Mother appear to have approved a good deal; but—who has seen what they condemned, excised, forestalled?

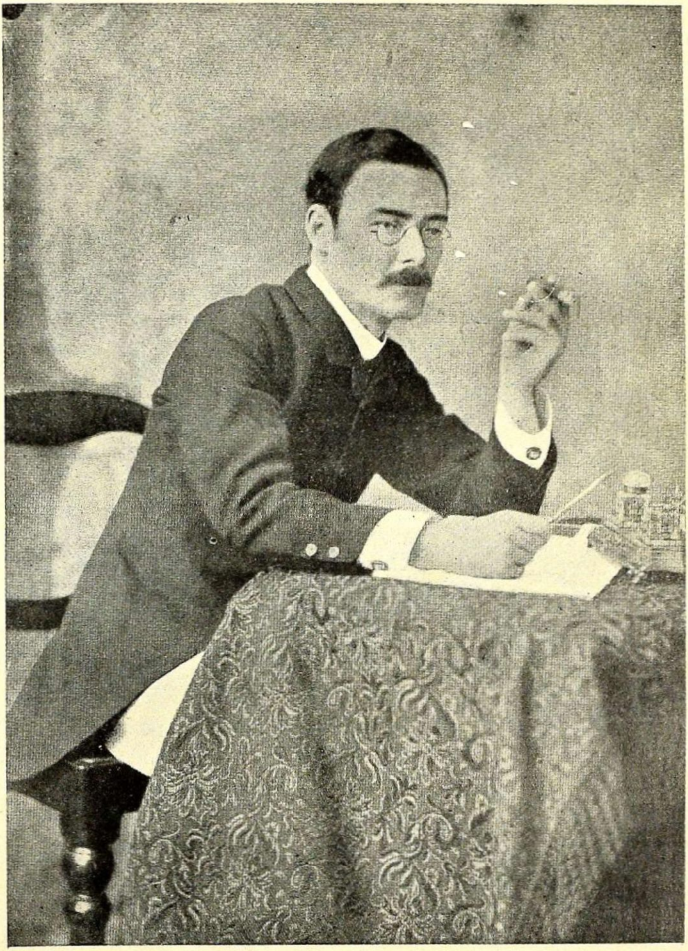
This certainty of operating from a safe base cut both ways. It gave Kipling self-confidence—without a meed of which the young are useless; it obliged him also to accept the values of the base itself. That these were generally conservative we have already surmised on good evidence; they were also conventionally correct. In India it has always been necessary to believe that the Men at the Head of Things are first-class men—Titans of intellect, Bayards of integrity, Daniels of judgment. The mere fact that they so often appear to fall short in one or other or all of these high qualities makes it all the more essential to sustain the illusion. In India the King can do no wrong; neither can his Viceroy; neither can the viceroys of the Viceroy. In the delicate branches at the top of the tree it is *ex hypothesi;* as one descends to the strong body of the trunk, it is *a fortiori*. It is surely not too much to assume that Lockwood Kipling, in his scheme of values, included this general belief; if so, it became one of the tenets of the base and Rudyard also must have believed it. No doubt Lockwood Kipling held Orde, I.C.S., and Tallantire, I.C.S., in a very profound respect; they took their place in that bed of geological strata as a sort of super-sahibs. There was nothing wrong in this in itself—Orde and Tallantire had well deserved it; but it meant that the antithesis between the two main strata—the "Sahibs" and the "Real Indians"—became even more clearly marked. The Sahibs were of godlike wisdom, the Real Indians were of, shall we say conversely, doglike devotion and innocence. Surely therefore, the one must guide, rule and control the other, now, henceforward and for evermore. The Real Indians, for all their excellence of heart, were in many ways backward and inefficient; if the Sahibs did not control their interests and spur them to higher achievement, who would? Not those upstart will-o'-the-wisps, the Hybrids—who were,

in any case, Unreal. Conceivably Lockwood Kipling would not have expressed himself in just these words but that is what he probably believed, and that is what he probably taught his son. The young Rudyard must have found himself embraced in a church wherein it was necessary to conform; it was obligatory to assume not only that the Sahibs ruled India for her good (that was demonstrable and belief in it was easy) but further that by Sahibhood they also achieved greatness. To break out into heresies about this would have been as much as the family's position was worth; the position was worth a good deal; Rudyard became no heretic.

He probably had no desire to. For here we touch on one of the Kipling contradictions; while endlessly inquisitive, he was also docile in the sense that he would accept certain opinions ready-made as right and unquestionable. He asked questions not to develop his mind but to obtain an answer; he accepted the answer he obtained and acceptance of an answer posits acceptance of the authority of the oracle which utters it. He longed then, as ever, for a reliable oracle. It was just these two opposing qualities—inquisitiveness and docility—that were now stimulated during these first years in India. His work at the office whipped up his curiosity; a vast secretive and puzzling continent lay to hand for its exercise. Per contra was the dawning notion of the Law; there are persons, it hinted, who are manifestly destined to be ruled and regulated; there are other persons as manifestly destined to be their rulers and regulators; this truth, which you see exemplified in India, is actually of universal application. Kipling accepted it; told that Indians were incapable of governing themselves, he pigeon-holed the statement and investigated no further; told that the heads of the administration in India were men of almost incredible excellence, he filed that information with the other. It was part of the creed of his new church; having joined that church, he conformed. (In fairness be it said that the Central Govern-

ment of the day were an unusually strong team: Roberts as Commander-in-Chief, the two Lyalls, Hope, Hunter and of course Dufferin himself.) Kipling was a born hero-worshipper; it was in his character to bow submissively to constituted authority, to take at face value those set above him; yet there had been a time when his faculty of criticism still flourished. Beetle can hardly be said to have bowed submissively to King, nor had Prout been regarded as *ex-officio* heroic. But now, in India, the critical faculty died; Kipling fell under the spell of the Little Tin Gods, sold like a bullock hoof and hide, and it was not for many years that any doubt of their godhead disturbed his mind. Even then—nearly a quarter of a century later—it was on a wistful note that he spoke to an audience of Naval Cadets: "The circumstances of my early training happened to throw me among disciplined men of action—I wrote about them. I did not realize that they. . . . constitute a very small portion of our world and do not attract much of its attention and interest."

There, then, we have Kuppeleen Sahib, the prey of contradictory stimuli which resulted in contradictory developments. On the one hand, a bouncing self-assurance, a blend of journalistic know-all and fourth-form irreverence; on the other hand an unquestioning readiness to bow the knee to the accepted gods of his tribe. When the first made things too hot for him in club, bazaar or office, he could retire to the base and console himself with the second. No wonder that his first editor—who perhaps had no such base to retire to—found him a little difficult. One sees him in the office of the *Civil and Military* as a contemporary has pictured him to us —shaking with laughter, the sweat pouring down his face and the spectacles slipping off his nose; his white cotton trousers and vest splashed and splattered with ink "like a Dalmatian dog," for he had the failing of the short-sighted for messing his clothes with anything that came to hand. He moved in jerks and thought, said some, in jerks likewise. He "laughed and joked the livelong day." A somewhat un-



" Kuppeleen Sahib "

A Photograph taken in Simla in 1886 when Kipling was 21

couth figure, perhaps,—a "quaint-looking sight" as even the more sympathetic of his editors called him—and one rather overpowering for an Indian hot weather. Yet he worked like a black; in a land of tired and jaded minds he shone and sparkled with ideas; in a land of lordly "Europeans" incapable of condescending to detail, he knew the work of the office from A to Z; given enough time, he could have written the paper, set the type, printed and issued it single-handed. He was loyal to his work; his mind and heart were in the newspaper office; when he attended a fancy dress dance it was as a printer's devil in a costume designed by his father—doublet and hose and a swishable tail. It is more than possible that Stephen Wheeler on the *C.M.G.* rated these donkey qualities more highly than the contributions with which he filled odd corners: it is almost certain that the proprietors of the *Pioneer* found his erratic genius more of an embarrassment than an asset. There is no great evidence that his work at the time met with the appreciation it deserved; much of it is preserved but much of it is difficult to trace and some of it is lost. It is surely an extraordinary thing, with an author of Kipling's popularity, that Martindell in 1923 could list as "uncollected" no fewer than 190 prose items and 121 in verse (although our loss may be less grievous than appears since the list admits *Ephemerae* and only 53 prose items and 22 in verse are post-1890). It was said by the unfriendly that in the winter of '85 you could have papered Lahore with unsold copies of *Quartette,* the family volume from Bikaneer House; we have already noted the chilly riposte of the *Daily Telegraph* to an offer of some Plain Tales. Be all this as it may, however, his Indian editors printed his work without serious question; and surely even the blindest of them must have realized that his staff had been steeled and its output gilded by the authentic essence of genius.

Kipling brought to India an enterprising mind capable of rapid impressions, and a power of putting these into words

which transcended that of any visitor before or since. What did he draw from his sojourn? What sort of mind did he take away with him again when—all too soon—he turned to a new love? In the first place it was a mind enriched by the conception of the Law—that conception which remained with him so long and might have remained with him for ever had not the gods he erected on its basis eventually betrayed him. It was in essence a Biblical conception—Torah of the Old Testament; an affair of rituals and behaviours, tabus and initiation; an Oriental affair, an Indian. India presented to Kipling a picture at once so convincing and so varied that he took it for the world in microcosm; the world therefore was divided into two classes—those incapable of managing their affairs and those almost divinely appointed to manage these affairs for them. There was no particular reason why this interesting and appropriate arrangement should not persist indefinitely; whom God has put asunder, let no man attempt to join; Kipling never seems to have seriously considered the idea that in course of time the second class, the incapables, might be elevated and instructed so that they merged with or displaced the first; still less that it was part of the Law that the first class should labour to bring this about. On the contrary, there was the Law; Class One were born knowing and understanding it; it was the duty of Class Two, under the aegis of Class One, to assimilate and follow it—or so much of it as they could comprehend. When, long afterwards, Kipling came to write about young Roman officers stationed on Hadrian's Wall, he made their problems and their attitude indistinguishable from those of young British officers stationed in the north-west of India; it was the same thing with young Strickland home from Africa; it was the same thing with Valens the young Roman at Antioch. All these young gentlemen, imbued by accident of birth or training with a knowledge of the Law, were there to regulate and instruct the "lesser breeds" without it; but their relationship as "sahibs" and "natives" was permanent, they could not

merge or exchange. The concept of the Law was the first thing Kipling drew from India; when, in the dissimilar—and much less congenial—surroundings of Vermont he sat down to write the *Jungle Books*, it was to the Law that he first came back; its importance diminished as the books proceeded but the first few stories are full of it. It reappeared presently, in a somewhat different form, in *Kim*. In the course of time the Law was to assume for Kipling a sort of mystical value; but in the early India days it seemed crystal clear and plain sailing; you had Orde and Tallantire expounding its tenets to the Real Indians who were doing their duty in that state of life, et cetera, et cetera. A very suitable arrangement. In the administrative heads of the Government, in the officers of the Indian Army above the rank of captain, or more generally in the British ruling classes, the Law—for reasons which Kipling shirked explaining—naturally inhered; it was their business to interpret it to those much more numerous classes in whom it—as naturally and unexplainedly—did not. In a limited sense this has recognizable features as a picture of British India, where Kipling erred—and where he built up trouble for himself—was in extending this picture beyond the Black Water—to the Empire as a whole, to the world.

"The Law" was one way in which India affected the young Kuppeleen Sahib; there was another natural bent or disposition on which the Indian scene wrought strongly—his curiosity. To young Kipling India seemed full of secrets. It does so appear to the intelligent young who arrive upon its shores; it is only with the passage of years that the realization dawns that the majority of these secrets are not worth discovering and that many of the others cannot be discovered because nobody at all remembers the answer. It does not really matter who dances the Halli-Hukk Dance or why; it is merely a piece of mumbo-jumbo invented by an obscure and negligible sect to impress itself with its own importance; you, I and old MacTavish at the Club can get together and invent

a secret Halli-Hukk Dance of our own which will be just as significant. But to the newly arrived with inquisitive tendencies this does not at first appear; on the contrary, a continent presents itself full of veils, tabus and fingers pressed on lips; it takes time to learn that there is generally nothing behind the veil, that the practitioner of the tabu has frequently forgotten why he does it and that he who is hushed into silence has in most cases nothing to say. Perhaps Kipling was not in India long enough to realize this disconcerting truth; perhaps his need of secrets, of things to "find out," would have helped him to deceive himself indefinitely. "Here is a land," thus runs the mind of the newly arrived, "full of enticing secrets; *someone* knows the answer to each of them; *someone* is in the know; *I* would like to be in the know too." Young Kipling had always had a bent for specialized knowledge, which had hitherto been confined to exploration among the more unusual volumes in Cormell Price's library at Westward Ho! Now suddenly this inquisitiveness received a tremendous fillip; a great new field was opened to it. To be in the know; the desire tormented him; he wrestled with obscurantist mullahs and hocus-pocus fakirs; he sat at the feet of Mackintosh Jellaluddins who spun unintelligible glories out of bazaar squalor and bazaar whisky. The Kipling was born who wanted to know the answers, and it was a desire which never left him.

These were a young man's concerns, a young man's illusions. And with that we come back to the fundamental aspect of Kipling in India which can never perhaps be too strongly emphasized. It has been said—let it be repeated—that Kipling arrived in India at the age of seventeen, and he left it—for good—at the age of twenty-four. How much of Kipling's Indian work can be explained, how many misconceptions dispelled, how many inept criticisms rebutted by diligent reflection on those simple facts. Kipling was a boy in India and his India was a boy's India. We have just been criticizing him in these pages because he failed to

observe—when nobody told him it was occurring and many people must have told him it was *not*—that a revolution was taking place in India. Surely that appears on second thought a short-sighted and unjust censure. Place a child in a toyshop and he will concern himself little with how or by whom or in what circumstances the toys were made; place an undergraduate in an establishment which purveys motor-cycles and his mind is unlikely to turn to the housing conditions of mechanics in Coventry. Kipling's interest in India was a boy's interest after all; he was enraptured by the decor and the trappings, the bright living kaleidoscope, all the colours in that wonderful new box of paints. He was caught up by the soldiers and the animals, the jungle and the Frontier, the spooks and the spoof, mewing lepers with supernatural powers, lonely men in outposts (with no Bikaneer House to fall back upon, poor wretches), Morrowbie Jukes and Love o' Women, blood, thunder and the Everlasting Hills. To these he added (after a season at Simla) the Club scandal, with the delight of an adolescent discussing these things for the first time with grown men. There are amazing flashes of a maturer insight—as, for instance, in "The Gadsbys"; but taken by and large, it was a boy's-eye view of India, retailed with a boy's gusto, a boy's lack of reticence, a boy's impudence. He did not see—because he was not interested to see—what lay in the dark wings behind this brilliantly illuminated stage; the political seethe, the struggling ideas of nationhood, the earnest essays in self-government, the higher and deeper religious thought—all the mind and spirit and soul of India. These are not matters for the young. It has been brought against Kipling that his mind never became fully adult; in the Indian period it was, quite properly, the mind of a boy.

If we bear this in mind, it is less surprising to find emerging from the work of Kipling's Indian days—which be it remembered, does *not* include *Kim, The Naulahka,* or the *Jungle Books*—a picture of that country containing so many

gaps as to be barely recognizable, or at any rate one which many with long experience of the country have failed to recognize. It is in this respect, of course, not greatly different from many of his other canvases; if it be the aim of the artist to "paint the Thing as he Sees It for the God of Things as they Are" not much else can be expected. For Kipling, from first to last, or at least for the first forty years of his work, saw everything larger than life, brighter than life; and he transferred to paper not so much a likeness as a vision. He meticulously collected facts but he assembled them after a manner of his own—much as a composer may take the notes of the octave and regroup them in arbitrary formations. His method was, in outline—"Here are certain objects arranged thus . . . they should be arranged *thus* . . . I wish they were so arranged . . . so, then, they *are* arranged." It was so with his picture of India in which every object and every person was made to assume a little plus or extra. His Simla with the breeze of a thousand infidelities whispering through the deodars; his soldiers in barracks or guard-room enduring agonies probably quite beyond any contemporary soldier's comprehension; his tortured exiles at The End of the Passage—who had really very little to complain of; all are magnified and coloured beyond reality. He betrayed, in fact, his own gospel: he painted not the Thing as he Saw It, but the Thing as he Thought It Should Have Been.

And yet, when all is said and done, how often has the pen of man achieved a body of work so persuasive, so enthralling, so eminently and eternally readable? Wherever the name of Kipling may die or be forgotten, it will certainly not be in India. It is half a century since those bright colours were first thrown on the canvas, fifty years since that picture of India was first displayed to the people of our land. In the interval there have been other pictures—some more detailed, many more accurate, many more authoritative. What has been the result? The picture painted by a boy between his seventeenth and twenty-fourth birthdays still

hangs on the wall to-day, bright and impressive as ever, while the others lie fading in the attic; that " boy's eccentric blunder " has convinced more people than will ever give scholarship a glance. It is so accepted, so established, that other versions are allowed to go by the board; whether it was portraiture, whether it was distortion, whether it was even invention pure and simple, it stands. That picture, in the minds of the majority of our people, is India; and it has so gathered round itself affection, authority and even almost worship that to challenge it seems almost like challenging direct revelation from the Divine.

IV

PAN IN VERMONT

" So far as I was concerned, I felt the atmosphere was to some extent hostile "

KIPLING, *Something of Myself*

IN 1889 India was abandoned and the assault on London was launched—if by a somewhat circuitous route. In that same year another young man had assailed the same Valhalla. He came from the Atlantic seaboard of the United States; he was a publisher, representing the American firm of John W. Lovell, and his aim was big business by way of the amalgamation of publishing firms. He also—perhaps unfortunately—wrote.

This young man's name was Wolcott Balestier and he came of a not unremarkable family which combined French with New England blood. As has already been said, they pro-

nounced their name—or had come by this time to pronounce it—" Boll-es-*teer*." One grandfather, Joseph Neree Balestier, had come to the States very early in life from Martinique; this was about the middle of the nineteenth century, and after a business career in Chicago he had built himself a country house near Brattleboro in Vermont—to which State he had originally been attracted by the excellence of its curative waters. The other grandfather, Erasmus Smith, was adviser in International Law to the Emperor of Japan—a less exacting task in those days than it afterwards became. The family had always had leanings towards culture and young Wolcott made it his livelihood; besides his own contributions in the fields of fiction and biography, he projected a series of publications called " The English Library " which was to rival Tauchnitz. In this young man's impetuous onslaught on London we see one of the earliest visits to the metropolis of an American publisher bent on Getting Things Done—and the metropolis, as so often thereafter, reeled under the impact. Wolcott was very much Vermont; his accent grated and he addressed ladies, whether married or single, as " Miss "; he had the supposedly American passion for collecting hotel labels of places he had not visited and affixing them to his luggage. He was no Adonis and he enjoyed far from robust health but there burned within him the invincible American urge to make the best " contacts." He made them. He set up house with his sister Caroline, first in St. John's Wood and later in Kensington, and from these citadels he sallied forth to storm the literary London of the day.

The American reader—and therefore the American publisher—has always treated his authors much more as living and human entities than has been the custom in these unfriendly islands; he is fired with a curiosity as to the hours at which they go to bed, the substances they eat for breakfast, the detailed environment in which the admired masterpiece

was committed to paper. Wolcott was no exception. If a writer interested him, he desired to make his (or her) acquaintance, to form what he called a " personal connection." This was harmless; but he had another and a less innocuous urge —he ardently desired to " collaborate." Now, on the other side of the Atlantic, it may have been the most natural thing in the world for the admirer to approach the admired and say, " I am enraptured by your latest novel; let us join together in producing a sequel "; but in the chillier atmosphere of literary London the proposal was not very heartily received. At the time of Kipling's arrival in London, Wolcott was smarting under a series of minor rebuffs which had culminated in a formidable setback; he had been greatly struck with the recently published *Robert Elsmere* and his first really serious assault had been upon Mrs. Humphrey Ward. He was, however, rejected; Mrs. Ward would have none of him.

It was at this stage that he heard of Rudyard Kipling, through Edmund Gosse whom, of course, he had duly " contacted." Gosse, who had been reading *Soldiers Three* advised Wolcott to keep his eye on Kipling. Wolcott savoured the strange syllables; "Rudyard Kipling?" he said. " Is it a man or a woman? What's its real name?" Gosse informed him that "it" was a male, that "its" name was genuine and that "it" was likely to become one of the greatest writers of the day. Wolcott said, " Now you're shouting!" but within a matter of hours he was reading *Soldiers Three* and the other Indian stories. They decided him; he brought up his batteries and made another contact. He made more than that; he made, as he put it, " a personal conquest." It is almost incredible—it is altogether incredible; but within a week (so Gosse has recorded) he had Kipling pinned down as a collaborator in *The Naulahka*. Kipling—whose creed was already independence, and the owning of oneself, whose conviction was that the craftsman must work out his own business on his own particular lines, who during those seven

long years in India had most unquestionably walked by himself! There is really no accounting for this extraordinary occurrence which is made the more fantastic by the fact—which must have been obvious to Kipling—that Wolcott as a writer was at best third-rate. The theory that Kipling was already interested in Wolcott's sister Caroline and that Wolcott levied on him the unwitting blackmail of the brother-in-law-to-be will hold no water; Kipling was committed to *The Naulahka* before he had ever set eyes on Caroline at all. There is nothing for it but to accept Wolcott's own version of a " personal conquest "—though that merely shifts the target of amazement. What Kipling saw in Wolcott Balestier is a question which has baffled everyone who knew them both; that he did see something quite remarkable and not universally apparent is evidenced by the astonishing verses of dedication with which he prefaced *Barrack-room Ballads* after Wolcott had died of typhus in 1891 in Dresden, whither he had gone in the interests of " The English Library "; an outstanding example of the tendency in Kipling which Edward Shanks has neatly called " painting with a spade." (The fact that a large part of this dedication was secondhand, having already appeared in a totally different connection in the *Scots Observer,* is extraordinary but beside the present point.) In fairness to Wolcott it must be admitted that his spell was felt by others besides Kipling; the curious will find a similar enthusiasm—similarly recorded in dedicatory form—in the authoress of *The Silence of Dean Maitland.* Henry James spoke well of his work, Gosse of his remarkable capacity for making friends, and Shorthouse (*John Inglesant*) of his " refined and delicate charm "; while Justin Macarthy could recall him as a " young man of singular and varied intellectual gifts with a sweet and lovable nature." But such tributes though doubtless no more than Wolcott's due, are a long way from those "gentlemen unafraid"—those officer-sahib archangels who so deeply disgusted Francis Adams and among whom, in Kipling's dedication,

Beyond the loom of the last lone star through open
darkness hurled
Sits he with those that praise our God for that they
served His world.

Macarthy and the others were conscious of the spell but Kipling was possessed by it; there were few moments in his life more fraught with weighty consequence than that in which the young representative of John W. Lovell called to introduce himself—and more.

This is not the place to discuss the resultant *Naulahka* which is unquestionably Kipling's worst book—and has therefore been the most slavishly imitated by a gallery of writers much less distinguished than Wolcott Balestier. It has an intolerable American plot (this surely *must* have been Wolcott's idea) about a young man from the Middle West who goes to India mainly to steal some sacred jewels in order that a railway company may be bribed with the proceeds to construct their new line through his home town. All of Kipling in it that is worth while had already appeared in "Letters of Marque." That however is not our present interest in the book or its importance in Kipling's life. What concerns us is the fact that their collaboration in its writing threw Kipling and Balestier into close association over a period of time. In the earlier days of their acquaintance Kipling had been living in those rather horrible lodgings in Villiers Street from whose dismal windows he once observed a man cutting his throat; and though in the later stages of the Balestier fever he was ensconced with his parents and his sister in Earl's Court Road, it is a shrewd guess that more of the work was done in Kensington than at either of these addresses. At Kensington Caroline Balestier kept house for Wolcott and it is a still better guess that she took a lively interest in the work in progress; she was ever a demon for work and from all accounts she was not a young woman who would willingly sit out when important business was

toward. If she possessed but one quarter of Wolcott's magic, then the fate of Kipling seemed inevitable and assured.

There is very little direct evidence in Kipling's writing as to his own affairs of the heart and one can be certain that he would cordially have subscribed to the oriental doctrine that these should remain unmentionable; it is impossible therefore to retrace the steps by which he fell in love with Caroline Balestier, who was, incidentally, five years his senior. In Villiers Street, he informs us himself, his most regular female companion had been an " elderly but upright barmaid "; but this is disingenuous; there was another affair, a much more serious affair which, originating in the distant past and recently revived, came about this period to final grief. Perhaps it was something of a rebound which carried Kipling to Kensington—and beyond. At all events little time was lost; the assured and cynical author of *Certain Maxims of Hafiz* fell with the customary rapidity and thoroughness of his type. Shot like a rabbit in a ride, indeed! He became engaged to Caroline. There were, however, difficulties—not the least of them the state of health to which Kipling had reduced himself by his preposterous overworking. The engagement was temporarily broken off and a desperate Kipling fled to New York with his uncle and godfather Frederic Macdonald. " My nephew, Mr. Rudyard Kipling," writes Macdonald in *As a Tale That is Told,* " being at the time a good deal out of health, determined on a voyage to New York and back. With a view to maintaining his privacy"—a characteristic touch!—" he registered under the name of Macdonald." The brilliance of the younger Mr. Macdonald's conversation raised strong suspicions among the passengers as to his identity and the New York reporters had the secret out of Frederic in a matter of hours; in any case the flight was of no avail. The inevitable fate was to be followed—Kipling returned and renewed his engagement and in 1892 (after a quick voyage to Australia and back) he married Caroline. The ceremony was carried out at All Souls'

in Langham Place with the furtiveness Kipling's privacy complex—already highly developed—was bound to engender on such an occasion; there were only a few guests and no reception and, coming away from the church, he was discommoded by observing that the evening papers carried the event on their placards.

Poor Wolcott was unable to attend the ceremony he would so much have enjoyed; his frail body had refused to carry his eager spirit and he was by this time dead and buried in Dresden. But the trail he had fired went blazing on. The young couple started off on a voyage round the world which was interrupted, after it had proceeded some distance, by an unfortunate reverse. In Yokohama they were met by the news that Kipling's bank had suspended payment and counsel was hurriedly taken as to the next step. It would have been possible to return to London and reconquer that already submissive capital; but—" Never go back the way you came " —Kipling decided on something new. Instead of London, they fell back on Mrs. Kipling's family home at Brattleboro in Vermont. There was a hired man's cottage on the place and there they set up their first house. By this they fired the earliest of many local hostilities; it was not considered quite the right thing of Kipling to bring home " the Balestier girl " in such circumstances. The circumstances themselves have been long and generally forgotten and chronology has been confounded with the result that there has been a good deal of misstatement; it has at times been made to appear that Alexander-Kipling, tiring of his English successes, sought a fresh world to conquer and advanced upon America. But as *Something of Myself* makes clear, it was no advance —it was a retreat. It was, in fact, the first retreat of a series.

The hired man's cottage did not remain a necessity for long. The Mowgli stories were written and money came in freely. Kipling decided to build a new house: it was to be largely of wood and in the form of a ship

with Kipling's study (the captain's cabin) at the prow and the kitchen (the engine-room) aft. With the influence of Wolcott still strongly upon him, he called it " Naulakha "—spelling the word for some reason otherwise, if more correctly, than in the book. The name, incongruous enough in that locality, must have puzzled the honest New Englanders. And with the building of Naulakha began the central tragi-comedy of Kipling's life.

The details of this episode are naturally hard to come by. *Something of Myself* dismisses it in a sentence; " so far as I was concerned, I felt the atmosphere was to some extent hostile "; if other versions be true, this is certainly a triumph of understatement. Howard Rice, in *Rudyard Kipling in New England*, is little more communicative. There is, however, a very full and elaborate account in a book called *Rudyard Kipling's Vermont Feud* by Mr. F. F. van de Water; its version seems corroborated by such evidence as exists and extracts had the cachet of appearing—or being reprinted—in one reputable American and one reputable English newspaper. We may therefore perhaps rely on it for the broad outlines of the tale. The protagonist in the story, then, is the third member of the Balestier trio—the younger brother Beatty. Beatty was something of a black sheep in that impeccable family; he drank; he was noisy; he refused to work, with the result that he was constantly in a state of pecuniary embarrassment. But he had his share of the family charm; he was " always real amusin' 'baout it "; he was witty, he had a tongue " like a skinning knife "; he was generous; he was popular therefore in local society; he was hail-fellow-well-met with half the county; he was accepted for what the best of him was worth in a community that set high store on individuality, a ready answer and a good pair of hands at a pinch. That community would have thought not one jot less of Caroline and her husband because Beatty was not all that could be desired, but unhappily the Kiplings could not see this. They regarded Beatty as a sad disgrace,

as an obstacle to their sovereignty, a bar to their acceptance; they set out to put him on his feet.

They had better perhaps have made sure in the first instance that their own feet were firmly planted. It has already been mentioned that Kipling's arrival with "the Balestier girl" in reduced circumstances was not locally approved; with the return to prosperity the newly married couple did little better. They made it sufficiently clear that they had no desire to be good neighbours; they stated that they wished to be left to themselves "so loudly and so often" says Mr. Van de Water, "that it became a challenge." Kipling mistrusted "Main Street" (his name for the adjacent township) whose inhabitants indulged in "terrifying intimacy" among themselves and were grossly over-interested in Naulakha's business; they gaped at him in church, so he stayed at home on Sundays—and wrote hymns. His distrust may have been well founded, for an apologetic but oddly worded cable from Brattleboro at the time of his death recalled how "he lived in fear of being shouted at and would run like a rabbit when accosted by hooligans." Main Street in turn stared with suspicious uncomprehension at the "No Trespass" notice boards that sprang up around Naulakha like a garden of baleful flowers; stared again at the Kiplings' private post office, Waite (it was called after the postmistress) and at their attempt to procure a private railway station. As an intruder from a nation politically unpopular and labelled in advance as "stand-offish," Kipling does seem to have behaved with an astonishing lack of ordinary tact. And the newcomers were not only exclusive, they were also appallingly English. For this local opinion was inclined to blame Caroline Kipling rather than Rudyard, who was "a friendlier spirit than his wife"; the charge is credible—though the training of a large Indian station tends also to an ultra-Englishness. It is recorded that they dressed for dinner every evening at Naulakha, Kipling "coming down" in full tails; the tails may be an exaggeration but they certainly kept English

servants and were driven about by a liveried coachman in a basket phaeton. These were not habits likely to ingratiate or recommend among a rough-and-ready farming community whose cautious verdict on the genius so far was that he was "too peculiar a critter for anyone to want as a friend." Their position in the neighbourhood was therefore still weak—certainly far too weak to challenge a showdown with that well-entrenched "character" Beatty.

At first all went well; Beatty was Kipling's friend and adviser; he built most of Naulakha; the first Vermont Christmas was spent at Beatty's place; we get a pleasant glimpse of him perhaps in "The Walking Delegate". But still Beatty demurred at work, still he was hard up; Kipling made the error of offering to keep his wife and child for twelve months if Beatty would find work for the same period; he was rewarded—probably much to his surprise—by the "tongue like a skinning-knife" stripping his own well-meaning person. Relations thereafter deteriorated. The final explosion came, as usual, from a very small thing. Beatty had sold the Kiplings a small piece of land opposite Naulakha on condition that he had "the mowing" of it; the Kiplings—or was it Mrs. Kipling?—turned it into an ornamental garden. Beatty was violent; Kipling, puzzled and distressed, was ill-advised enough to discuss the affair in public. According to Mr. Van de Water's version, which differs in some points from that of the contemporary Press reports, he told a Colonel Goodhue in a local hotel that he had been obliged to carry Beatty for the last year, "to hold him up by the seat of his breeches.' This confidence the gallant Colonel was indiscreet enough to repeat and the incident proved to be the last straw. Cycling home one night along the Pine Hill road, Kipling found his way blocked by Beatty with a team and wagon. The team was wheeled across the road, Kipling was knocked off his cycle and Beatty threatened to blow out his god-damned brains. (So Kipling testified but Beatty admitted only to promising him the thrashing of his life.) Kipling—he was

hardly to be blamed—took the family nuisance to court. He was not perhaps to be blamed; but he was certainly to be pitied.

For, as they said locally, "Kip had a bear by the tail." He was still the stranger, the "peculiar critter"; Beatty was a notorious idler, a notorious pest, but he was no stranger and his peculiarities were those on which contemporary Vermont looked with indulgence. The sheriff arrested Beatty, who of course was unable to find bail; he went to prison. "Rich Famous Author Casts Humble Brother-in-law into Gaol"; if the local papers did not print these headlines, the local tongues in chorus announced them. At the preliminary hearing Kipling gave Beatty an easy chance by offering to find him bail; Beatty of course refused amid applause. The hearing was adjourned; by the time it reopened Kipling's position was already hopeless. Already and irretrievably the thing had become comedy; the court was crowded with an audience who had come to be amused. Beatty's counsel—not without some connivance from the bench—gave Kipling a roasting cross-examination; and though in the end Beatty was bound over to appear before the Grand Jury in September, the pyrrhic nature of this victory was only too evident to all. The American Press, to whom Kipling had been particularly "English," came into its own. The story went all over the States; there were drawings and cartoons, there were parody verses; "'Who's that a-loping down the lane?' said the copper-ready-made. 'It's Rudyard running for his life,' the first selectman said"—and in the picture you saw Rudyard doing it. It was hopeless; some men might have stood up to this public mud-bath but it was too much to expect of Rudyard Kipling with his privacy complex. The Grand Jury was to meet in September, but the case was never called; in August the Kiplings fled with their two daughters and a few suitcases. They fled to England and the Vermont period ended. They never came back.

The really sad—and at the same time interesting—point

about this episode is that it is *par excellence* a Kipling story ready-written. It has all the ingredients; possibly well-meaning but uppish interloper comes in contact with the people of the soil; disaster results; the disaster is accomplished not by violence but by ridicule and the ridicule is brought to bear on the peculiar and fatal chink in the victim's armour. It is a Kipling recipe; perhaps he learned it in this hard school of Vermont fact. He never actually wrote that story—that would be too much to expect—but one can detect snatches of it *passim*.

The last act of the Vermont comedy goes shockingly out of key; we are switched with brutal suddenness to tragedy pure and simple. In the beginning of 1899 the Kiplings with their two little girls and their infant son ventured back upon that fatal visit to New York; their journey was ostensibly connected with copyright litigation but perhaps they intended also to test the temperatures in Vermont, or at least to recover their belongings. Vermont, it is said, was ready to propose a reception and a state dinner; but Beatty was waiting; Mr. Van de Water represents him as running well up to form and bringing an immediate action against Kipling for fifty thousand dollars for defamation. It was a characteristically impudent stroke but left to itself it could hardly have succeeded even in its presumable object of scaring Kipling away back to England. But it was not left to itself. The gods, it seemed, had wearied of the comedy of Naulakha and with one lethal and contemptuous gesture they swept its actors headlong from the stage. In a matter of days Taffimai lay dead and Tegumai so nearly dead that he could be told nothing of the event till long after it was over. Thereafter there was nothing for it but flight again—a long flight in search of shell after shell, hidey-hole after hidey-hole; the possessions at Naulakha, the possibilities of a second campaign with Beatty, Vermont itself and all in and about it, were now but ashes and dust.

So the comedy turned to tragedy as quickly as in the case

of Losson's parrot or the Great Pop Picnic. Yet in a sense tragedy had already haunted those Vermont years. If one will give rein to the imagination, put oneself from stage to stage in Kipling's place—Kipling with his hatred of mud-slinging, of gaping faces, of anything resembling a row in the street—and reconstruct for oneself his feelings throughout—on the Pine Hill road, on the stand in the country court-house, in the market-place thereafter—then indeed it is an agonizing story. No wonder that, faced by the prospect of going through it all again, the " peculiar critter " fled.

According to Mr. Van de Water and others, there are—or were until recently—Indian draperies hanging in Naulakha, and Joel Chandler's plaster casts of Bagheera and Grey Brother still survive in that study which had been the prow of the ship. Kipling's desk is still there but the inscription he had carved on it, " Oft was I weary as I toiled at thee " was erased by order of Mrs. Kipling before the place was finally sold. Lockwood Kipling, on one of his visits, had carved on the mantelpiece, " Night cometh when no man can work." So far as Naulakha was concerned, night had indeed fallen—and for ever.

The story of the American interlude has been set forth at some length because in its earlier episodes it is not unentertaining, because it is an instructive example of *hubris* and its attendant doom, and because it produced very marked effects in its central figure. It has been said that Kipling in India was still a boy with a boy's delight in soldiers and spooks and the gaudier colours in the paint-box. In London he remained a boy, though always, of course, the Kipling boy, introvert and observant, like a successful zoologist—as Gosse put it—noting the habits of wild animals and birds, always self-contained and cocksure; he tells us himself a curious story of how he spent a juvenile evening " taking in " a leading London literary critic with his account of a writer who never existed. (One wonders if the critic was being merely polite and was not " taken in " at all; there were critics on the earth

in those days.) Such an episode takes us back to the glorious world of King and Beetle and it may well be true; his mind at the time—once again, he was but five-and-twenty—ached for a little frivolity and he was sadly missing those lively Lahore friends and the Haunted Subalterns, Messrs. Horrocks and Tesser of the Inextinguishables. Like so many returned Anglo-Indians, he found the stay-at-home Englishman rather a solemn owl, old for his age and preposterously respectable. But the mood of boyish frivolity was doomed; the spoofing of Gosse—one does hope it was Gosse—was to be the last of the larks. In Vermont—partly no doubt because of the repressive hand of Caroline on the reins but more because of that losing throw with Beatty—in Vermont, Pan—the other kind of Pan—at last grew up. And in the final avalanche of disaster at the Grenoble Hotel in 1899 the last relics of the boy Kipling were beaten out of sight. Into what sort of man would he turn? That also was conditioned by the American experience.

In the first place one would expect to find—and does to some extent find—an anti-American. In the States to-day Kipling has probably more friends and admirers than at any time in his life; indeed it is difficult now to credit the coldness of his original reception there; it is necessary to remind oneself that political relations between America and Britain were then far from serene and that an Anglo-American war had within the last thirty years been at least a grim possibility. But even Kipling's American friends and admirers of today will insist that for long after his return to England Kipling was unfair to their countrymen. They instance the absurd Wilton Sargent who "flagged" the Great Buchonian's Induna; they instance Laughton Zigler, the "Captive"; they instance, at a later stage, Mr. Tarworth whose mental make-and-break had become defective so that he projected the "Ne-meesis of Presumption." There is some justice in these complaints: the Chapins in "An Habitation Enforced" are nice people—it hardly goes further than that—but most of Kipling's later

Americans are in one sense or another cranks, neurotics, simpletons. It can be urged also that this is a post-Vermont attitude; the *Pioneer's* correspondent in 1889 had written warmly of Americans (" I love this people "; the passage, which carries generosity almost into the sphere of " spade-painting," will be found at the opening of the thirty-third chapter of *From Sea to Sea*). And in Vermont Kipling had seemed at least to like Americans and to desire their friendship. He had studied them in the keenest of his " bird-watching " moods but with more sympathy than usual. The horses in " The Walking Delegate," the American railway engines in ".007," are delineated with something like love; Disko Troop and his ship's company are displayed as unpretentious heroes. It is true that Kipling had no very high opinion of " the long narrow pig-trough " of New York and that he was always ready to mistake for nosey-Parkering what was no doubt intended for neighbourly interest. But he seemed to appreciate the great American qualities and he had grasped that fundamental and so often puzzling contradiction of the American character by which a steel-and-concrete facade is erected over oil-wells of the stickiest sentiment. In his post-Vermont stories he did perhaps no more than stress this national weakness; he stressed it without rancour and without caricature. This last was in itself an indication that he still carried a soft spot in his heart for the Americans; for where he hated, he caricatured vilely. Indeed, when one considers the atrocious comic-paper Irish that sometimes flows from the mouth of Mulvaney, the deplorable German-English of Hans Breitmann or of Muller, All-India Conservator of Forests—then one would say that Kipling's Americans have come out of it not so badly. With all that, however, one nods approvingly over Henry Adams' comment that " Kipling and the American were not one but two and would not be glued together." It could not be done; Kipling, like Disko Troop, was too " set in his judgments."

But the American interlude had deeper and more far-

reaching effects than these. Kipling approached America as a surf-rider on the crest of the wave; he was flung back on his own beach before an audience not wholly disinclined to jeer, a much less resplendent figure—bruised and battered by the surf-board, winded by the pounding of the seas and half-full of bitter-salt water. He had gone to America a rather spoilt young man in the comfortable certainty that, as he had always conquered in the past, so he would always conquer in the future; he was " a little maddened," as Gosse said, " though not yet poisoned by praise." London had fallen at his feet; great men of letters had done him the honour of serious criticism, the still greater honour of vitriolic attack. (He was still, it is yet again worth noting, but seven-and-twenty.) In America he was laughed out of court. It was all wrong, it was bewildering, it demanded a re-examination of the world and all its values. What had he done amiss? He had gone to take refuge in the land of his wife's people and to make it his future home, he had endeavoured to cultivate and enjoy those people; in the midst of this he was assailed by a ne'er-do-well in-law who was admittedly a scamp. Now was surely the time for all good men and true to come to the aid of the party; now was the time for the classes to unite in suppressing an undesirable. There should have been classes ready and eager to do it. But there were none; or if there were, they turned with incomprehensible relish to the side of the scamp. The wretched Goodhue—a Colonel, mark you; surely one could have trusted a Colonel?—committed ungentlemanly indiscretions; the local version of Orde or Tallantire, sitting on the bench, connived with a *vakil* to one's ridicule and undoing. It was monstrous. It was not the Law; it was very far from being the Law. Was the Law then an illusion? Were there areas on earth where it did not—and could not—run?

If Kipling had remained in America, he would probably have come to the conclusion that the Law required a preamble more clearly defining its scope and extent, in which

case his subsequent career and writing would have been different. But he did not remain in America; he retired hurt to England and—more important still—to the society of ladies and gentlemen. Here were people who did not think it amiss to dress for dinner nightly and who were not averse to the convention of retaining servants who said " sir " and " madam ". England on her part was ready and willing to welcome back her wounded traveller. The traveller had made a good deal of money out of America; England, as befitted the central emporium of a nation of shop-keepers, was ready to unroll before him her very desirable goods. (And if they seemed desirable to Rudyard, they must have seemed *a fortiori* desirable to Caroline.) Here, said England, is a country as rich as Hind in historic pageantry, as well endowed as Vermont with an honest and sensible folk. But—and this is to the present point—it is also a country where persons of the type of Beatty Balestier are not allowed to Get Away With It. " It is an intolerable thing," said the voice of England, speaking through the smiling and traditional facade of Devon and Sussex, " it is an intolerable thing that a 'superior being, needing freedom to develop his superior abilities should be cramped and tormented by the stupidity of his social inferiors'." (The quoted words are Edmund Wilson's, but they are in effect what England said.) " You are a highly distinguished man," said England, " in this country you will find your peers ready to assess you at your proper value and to accept you into their circle; I do not say they are your intellectual peers, but for any deficiency in that line their social eminence will amply compensate. We should like you to be an English gentleman; consider the proposition. Take yourself a nice house, subscribe to a sitting in the village church (you needn't very often attend service so long as you have the vicar to dine once a quarter) acquire some dogs and if possible horses, cultivate Squire and Parson and We will make you One of Us. You have long hankered to be

Initiate, to be a Member; here is the Society you should join; here, dear sir, is your Lodge."

It was the old insidious attack which England has made, time and again, on so many of her rebels, so many of her truants; it has rarely failed and it did not fail in the case of Kipling. " Inside ' Brother ' and it doesn't do no 'arm "; *but* " Outside, ' Sergeant! Sir! Salute! Salaam!' " That is the Law; that is the ordained order of society. Mulvaney frequently called that Indian War Correspondent "sir" (or rather, unfortunately, "*sor*") and occasionally even saluted him, but that was part of his Irish blarney; Ortheris and Learoyd never did—even when he provided the beer. The relationship between the Soldiers Three and their chronicler was not on a " sir—salute " basis. But now and henceforward that was to be the basis of the relationship between Kipling and those classes from which the Soldiers Three had been drawn. The crowds of India—who, Heaven knows, will gape and peer and pester with the best—had excited no antagonism in the breast of Kuppeleen Sahib, but the trippers at Rottingdean drove him raging to Bateman's. Kipling, ever something of a chameleon, took on the colour of his company—and it was, for a time, a drab and uninteresting hue. He must not be too heavily blamed; the attack of upper-class England is an insidious one and has brought down many more naturally endowed to resist it than was this respectful apostle of the Law, of which upper-class England seemed the very embodiment. One is inspired by burning ideas about economic oppression in India—but So-and-So at the India Office is such a charming fellow that things begin to look different; one feels bitterly about the Irish or the Depressed Areas or the Coal Strike—but these feelings are not, it seems, shared by the members of that West End club to which one has just been elected. Cushions are spread, one sits down on them; a bed is laid, one sinks into it; a warm Lethe-like bath is poured for one, one lapses into it and forgets.

It is quite probable that some such transformation would

have overtaken Kipling in any case; his natural inclinations headed him in that direction and Caroline would hardly have demurred. In later years it was said of her unkindly that she allowed her husband off the chain only to dine with duchesses; but in truth Kipling himself, coming from humble stock and the least thing in the world parvenu, had in himself—which of us has not?—the germs of snobbery. These germs, incubating in the warm bath of Sussex county, were fostered by the distant and invisible hand of Beatty Balestier. But for Beatty the Kiplings would almost unquestionably have remained contentedly within the wooden walls of Naulakha; so much good work had been done in that captain's cabin at the prow of the ship while Caroline with her sewing mounted guard against the seductive guest or the ever-persistent pressman. In time, but for Beatty, they might even have been absorbed into the local civilization. But Beatty had altered all that. The vanity that formed no small part of Kipling's composition—and had so often got him disliked—had been severely wounded in the course of that protracted warfare at Brattleboro. Privacy had indeed been invaded, domestic intimacies publicized, mud had flown in all directions, dirty linen had been washed before a gaping and hostile mob and the retreat had finally been beaten to a ghoulish chorus of hee-haw Vermont guffaws. Whatever of vanity survived this gruelling contest must still have been smarting sorely. How soothing then the quiet voice of England with her reconstituting suggestions; how restorative the cushions, the bed, the bath of Lethe. Little things laid balm on the wound; the respectful ticket-clerk at the station touching his hat and saying "sir"; the deference of tradesmen; the brotherhood of the Ordes and Tallantires of this new and superior world; the bland complimentary clergy. How comforting all of it—and especially to one who sprang from no very exalted forebears and from ancestral households "conversant," as he was later to tell the St. Andrews students, "with a certain strictness in domestic matters." No wonder

that Kipling, bruised, hurt, bewildered, turned to his "amazing country of England" with the conviction that here at last he had found his spiritual home. Here in England the Law still ran; and he had not been mistaken as to its Prophets.

To all this much—to a new angle of vision, a new sense of location in the scheme of things, a grateful subsidence into upper-class English society—Beatty Balestier and the Vermont feud greatly contributed. But for the other change that was coming over Kipling—the major change in his outlook and his work—America had only a secondary responsibility. No doubt the events which caused it took place in New York, but had they occurred in Lahore or Rottingdean, their effects would have been the same. Nothing is so surprising as the surprise of the half-informed—often loudly and contemptuously expressed—at the change in Kipling's work which coincided with the turn of the century and became more and more marked as the century went on. An instant's reflection would surely suggest that a man who has barely survived a prostrating illness and has simultaneously lost the creature he loved best in the world could hardly be expected to continue precisely as before. If he seemed for a time to perish, to withdraw from the battle, to have no more to say, to lean weakly upon comforts and privileges, to venture only such utterances as seemed expedient and pleasing to authority—was it matter for wonder? Angela Thirkell has written: "Much of the beloved Cousin Ruddy of our childhood died with Josephine, and I feel that I have never seen him as a real person since that year"; and if this was noticeable in the citadel of his own family, it could not be other than indirectly apparent to the wider circle of those for whom he wrote. The symptoms were clear enough; he turned away from persons, he turned away to machines and books and such stuff as dreams are made on, to things that never lived and to the dead—who return. In a sense he never did write again with the vitality and gusto of those early days in India; in a sense a part of

him did perish. It required the passage of many years, much experiment and yet another disaster—the greatest that man can suffer—to raise him again to a new level.

It has just been said that he turned away from persons; let it not be implied that he lost in humanity. On the contrary, perhaps, the one clear result of those ill-starred American years was that his humanity was born. He who was hard has become soft, he who was certain has become doubtful; henceforward he is vulnerable. There are wounds that ache in the nights; there are points where he can be touched and where the old pain can be revived. He who jeered has become sympathetic; he who was so forthright upon the foibles of his fellows now has consideration. There enters into his work a new quality—because he stood in need of it himself—the quality of mercy. There is no mercy in the early Kipling; no pity in "The Phantom Rickshaw" or "A Bank Fraud"; Mrs. Herriott in "The Gadsbys" gets her plain deserts; Badalia Herodsfoot drees her inevitable weird. The Law is the Law; mercy is not its function but the Judge's—with whom Kipling has nothing to do. But just as the American misadventure drove him, a hunted creature, from one shell to another, so too it opened in him new perceptions. For the first time in his life he saw clearly that a case has two sides; and for the first time in his life he was ready to look at both of them.

But this has surely been a significant chapter in Kipling's life; and the family of Balestier—so casually encountered—is shown to have wielded a magic influence in his destinies. If he had not married Caroline Balestier he would never have gone to America, or at all events not in the circumstances which brought about his downfall there. If he had not gone to America, but what is the use of pursuing impossible hypotheses? Let us consider instead his marriage itself—which has been neglected by our absorption in the affair Beatty. Of Caroline Kipling all the things have been said which are usually said of the wives of great writers—except that she

wrote his work; and also many of the things which are usually said of wives five years older than their husbands. It has been said that she carried him off from all his friends, tightening the purse-strings unbearably, interposing a jealous control which terminated his hospitalities and placed a final embargo upon all that " fun " in which his boyish spirit had so greatly delighted. Some of all this may—perhaps must—have foundation in truth. Caroline had an acquisitive nature—one recalls brother Wolcott's smash-and-grab tactics—and it would be fair to say that her most treasured and therefore most tightly held possession was her husband. The phrase " Mrs. Kipling's husband " was not coined either pointlessly in jest or unwarrantably in malice; it had a substratum of fact. To keep friends with Rudyard, said one of long standing, you " had to do Raleigh to Caroline's Elizabeth"; another protested that he had been obliged to allow Caroline to refurnish his entire house—" but it was worth it." The implication is that this acceptedly happy marriage was made so only by the complete surrender of Rudyard to Caroline; cynics will add that this—the virtual elimination of one partner—is the only way in which marriage *can* be made happy. Hafiz, in earlier days, might have turned a neat maxim on the subject.

Castlerosse and others have represented Caroline as governess, matron and almost nurse—with a touch of gaoler and slave-driver added to all three. She was certainly determined, directive and pugnacious. She possessed a business sense as keen and ambitious as Wolcott's—at one time it was said that Bateman's was the only farm in East Sussex that showed a profit. Yet it was perhaps a little ruefully that Kipling said to a friend, " I'm the works; there "—indicating the ever-watchful Carrie—" is the works manager." On the other hand, this management may have been his precise desire as it was quite obviously his need; we may have seen him in Lahore as a thoroughly domesticated creature, homing to the family bosom and yearning in its absence; nor is there any-

thing in his reminiscences to indicate that he was particularly capable of looking after himself—at the height of his London fame he could do no better than Villiers Street and that "elderly but upright barmaid." He may therefore have enjoyed—and probably did enjoy—being looked after to the point of domination. One can only say of Caroline—basing the verdict upon his written work—that, in spite of the fact that they were happily married for nearly half a century, she does not seem to have added greatly to his knowledge or contributed in marked degree to the sum of his experience. But she did something—in Kipling's eyes at least—infinitely more valuable; she gave him his children. At all stages of his life he doted upon children, and now to have children of his own! Had Caroline been a hundred times more repressive, a thousand times more dominating, John, Josephine and Elsie must have kept him her permanent debtor. No wonder that Caroline, not beautiful, not popular, not always lovable, reigned unassailably for more than forty years.

V

SOMETHING OF HIMSELF

"Lord ha' mercy on me, this is none of I!"

KIPLING to a Friend, in dismay at the tributes on his seventieth birthday.

A CRITIC of this book may reasonably object that the picture of Kipling it is assembling is not a picture at all but a mere sum of episodes whose effect on their subject is conditioned by hereditary traits. Yet the more one studies Kipling's

character and personality, the more one seems obliged to see him in just this light—if not as a sum of episodes at least as the sum of the successive moods they induced. In a sense, of course, every human life is just such a series and the method of deduction from heredity and environment may always be overdone. Yet the excuse must be advanced that in the case of Rudyard Kipling the method is, to say the least, inviting and that it has at least the appearance of yielding results. On this supposition the previous chapters have been based; we have considered Kipling's antecedents and surveyed the cardinal and formative periods in his life. At the cost of some recapitulation we may now cast the account and present the sum total at which we arrive.

Let us in the first place return to the point from which we started and emphasize once more that Kipling was the product of a long line of Yorkshire Nonconformists, crossed by a Scottish Highland strain also given to religion as a form of self-expression. It is quite easy to believe that if his lines had fallen somewhat differently, he might well have followed his grandfather's calling. But Lockwood Kipling's appointment to Bombay disposed of that; even a childhood in India is a prelude too illuminating to permit of a sequel spent in Nonconformist pulpits. And if, when he returned to India at seventeen, young Rudyard brought out with him any tendencies towards the austerer forms of Christianity, they must have been severely shaken—as they are bound to be in the case of any intelligent and fair-minded person—by contact with the mystically tolerant Hindu and the aggressively devout Muslim. (*Can* all these people be foredamned? *Can* all their ideas be mere corruption?) Lockwood Kipling professed himself as of all religions or none, and regarded church-goers as unintelligent; Rudyard fell very soon into step with his father; and though he dealt mostly with Muslims and ostensibly preferred them, there is a good deal of the despised Hindu in his contemporary thinking during the Seven Years' Hard. His attitude became Kabir's:

My brother kneels, so saith Kabir,
    To stone and brass in heathen-wise,
But in my brother's voice I hear
    My own unanswered agonies.
His god is as his fates assign,
His prayer is all the world's—and mine.

The young writer of that had slipped a considerable way into Hinduism; perhaps it is a rather creditable confession from an opinionated young man of rigorously Wesleyan antecedents.

It is in any case as near a statement of Kipling's religion as has been vouchsafed to us; he held—and who shall gainsay him?—that a man's private religious beliefs were not for publication. Yet those Yorkshire and Macdonald ancestors would out; he wore at all times—though only on occasion was he fully conscious of it—the mantle of the preacher. He preached no religion, but his occasional direct fulminations on social or political themes were imbued with the spirit and couched in the style of one who realized himself as born with a mission regularly to instruct and, when necessity arose, to save. Ogden Nash is credited with the shrewd remark that Kipling was "a dandy demonstration of hereditary traits"; it is an aspect which must never be forgotten if he is to be fully understood.

Kipling had another quality of the preacher—indeed of the old-school prophet of Israel; he had the certainty of revealed knowledge. He knew that he knew. This was not a bluff—as it has so often been misrepresented; it was a belief. Even in his schooldays he posed as a repository of wisdom, of inscrutable and inspired omniscience; he *knew*—and his companions must be content to accept the fact nor question the sources of his knowledge. Their reception of these take-it-or-leave-it methods was sufficiently encouraging to induce him to repeat them before a wider and more adult audience. Behind all the "cockiness" of his early days in India lurks this fundamental postulate; the jaunti-

ness of its expression is a matter of adolescent immaturity but the assurance of rightness is basic. Nothing ever completely shook him out of this conviction; for many years nothing ever seriously challenged it; indeed, the consistency of his early success must have been a positive encouragement. The world as he saw it was a relatively straightforward affair; it was something which could be known as the answer to a sum is known and he, Rudyard Kipling, *knew* it. It was not till the American tragedy that anything occurred to shake this mood of confidence, and it is the cardinal importance of that little-stressed incident in his life that it did seriously shake it. Years had to pass before the confusion it caused in the depths of his being was able to clear itself away in a new form of self-expression, a new style of writing; but it is none the less to this confusion that these new modes are to be ascribed. Even then his conviction of infallibility was only shaken, not shattered; in a spirit of qualified inspiration, of knowledge directly communicated from God, he remained to the end.

The dangers underlying an assumption of this sort are too obvious to require demonstration—they are perfectly obvious in Kipling. If one is convinced that one's intuitions are likely to make swift and sure contact with reality, there is a grave temptation to take mental short-cuts which will eliminate by an inspired guess the tedious processes of thought and study. "I should know about that" or "I expect I know" becomes "I *know*." There is a good deal of this in the earlier Kipling—as there was a good deal of it in the earlier prophets of Israel; hasty generalizations, hastier moral judgments, are the result. Kipling would have altered a phrase which has become current since his day; "Your guess," he would have said "is *not* as good as mine. My guess is more than a guess; I know I am right." How many generations of Methodist preachers put their shoulders together inside Kipling to compass this consoling certitude?

As we have already had occasion to observe, Kipling's was

a character made up of contradictions—often of the most direct contradictions possible. To this again his ancestry to some extent contributed. It is true that there were ministers of religion on both sides of it; but the religion they practised, though similar in tenets and even in denomination, sprang from different characters and different fountains of belief. On the one side was the hard-headed practical Yorkshire commonsense; on the other the Highland mystical semi-superstition, deriving from an ancestor who was sufficiently unpractical to forsake all for a romantic cause. In Kipling this hard-headedness and this romanticism fought a lifelong battle. To the practical side he owed his intense preoccupation with what we should now call gadgets, his insatiable interest in the question "How does it work?" but it was to the romantic that he owed his power and from it he drew everything that raised him above the ruck of writers. From this side came the Dreamer Whose Dreams Come True, from it came both Kipling-Kim and Kipling-Lama, seeker and omniscient in one, the fusion of teacher and taught. For our present purposes the effect of this particular contradiction—an effect be it noted of heredity—was that it presented the world with a large-scale dreamer armed with an aptitude for mundane details sufficient to endue his dreams with an intensely realistic appearance. Such a combination could hardly fail either in power of invention or language wherewith to express it.

On this inherited foundation—that of a preacher with at least two barrels to his gun—events proceeded to erect, and rapidly, an unusual structure. A childhood's experience so horrible that in a weaker nature it might well have slaughtered self-expression let alone self-confidence for ever was succeeded by a period of school life in an establishment which was, to say the least, unorthodox. On these repressions followed in turn a release so complete and untrammelled that it must have appeared—and did appear to Kipling—like translation to another world or re-birth in this one. For a time the spiral

ascended and with dazzling velocity; but the pace was too hot to last; Nemesis arrived inevitably and with equal violence the spiral fell back upon itself. These alternations followed one another in rapid sequence and it is worth noting that when the contrary gales at last subsided Kipling had still more than half his life to live.

The effects of the earlier of these periods—the years in the house of *Baa Baa* and at Westward Ho!—have been, as already suggested, often exaggerated and often misunderstood. To say, as for instance Edmund Wilson does, that as a result of them " the whole work of Kipling's life is to be shot through with hatred " is to talk nonsense, or to magnify unduly an occasional burst of peevishness or broadside of invective: and one's eyebrows rise at Wilson's parallel statement that " Kipling's *Baa Baa* years left him with a fundamental submissiveness to authority." These early years did neither the one nor the other. Kipling did not hate mankind provided mankind would leave him alone. He did not submit to authority whether it left him alone or not—on the contrary, he was often furiously annoyed by even its distant and irrelevant activities; and if in principle he revered it, this was for other reasons than those inculcated by the canes of the United Services College or the inquisitions of the Demon Boy. To be a law-abiding rebel was but another of Kipling's internecine contradictions. There are, however, two aspects of Kipling's character which seem to derive so plausibly from just such experiences as he underwent at Southsea and at Westward Ho! that they can arguably be ascribed as their products.

The first is that privacy complex we have so often noticed. Any imaginative child has a need for some place where it can sit by itself working out its own fantasies and in company with the creatures of its mind; it requires a quiet corner in which it can write and draw without interruption either from the guffaws of its contemporaries or the even more irritating

patronage of the adult. Neither at Forlorn Lodge nor at Westward Ho! were these facilities ever remotely within reach of young Kipling. In the former, suspicion and misunderstanding (he was not an imaginative genius there, he was a "little liar") and in the latter a riotously communal regime ruled any semblance of privacy out of the question. It would hardly have been natural, therefore, if the resolve had not been formed—"Let me but escape from this durance and I will see to it that my privacy is uninterrupted ever after." Kipling did escape and the conservation of his privacy was ever after a guiding principle of his life. Introvert by nature, he was content to live and work by himself and for himself. He encouraged neither criticism (the guffaws of the fourth form) nor praise (the adult's well-intentioned patronage). The moral of "The Gadsbys"—"travel *alone*"—came from the depths of his heart and the springs of his being. One could multiply instances of this "privacy"; that almost clandestine marriage in Langham Place attended only by Gosse, Henry James and Ambrose Poynter; the "no trespassing" notices that studded the demesne of Naulakha, the obscure hotel of that fatal visit to New York; his absurdly ill-tempered and useless denials that his Christian name derived from Rudyard Lake in Staffordshire where his parents courted; the little tripper-dodger from Bateman's clenching his teeth on his pipe and running for the Downs. It was for this reason that, in his prosperous days, he resented the police and the local authority with a testiness which comes out in such stories as "Steam Tactics", "Beauty Spots" and the opening of "The Prophet and the Country": for it is part of the business of these functionaries to invade privacy, to poke and pry and interfere. In "As Easy as A.B.C." Chicago's complaint was "crowd-making and invasion of privacy." There is no need to accumulate examples; the complex is conspicuous, and in the tormenting frustrating publicities of Southsea and Westward Ho! one may discern its source.

All this is not of course to be construed as meaning that Kipling was shy or lacking in self-confidence; he was never in the least shy and his assurance verged often upon impudence. If he shrank from his fellows it was not because he was at any time embarrassed by self-depreciation but because he resented their intrusion—resented even their existence. At the moment of his own choosing he could enjoy and seek the limelight with any prima donna who ever took a call, just as he enjoyed the society of his friends—when he felt inclined for company; no invasion of privacy is involved in either case. But the public appearance or the arrival of visitors must be made at his time and no other, and at all other times he must be left severely alone and undisturbed.

There was another result of Kipling's early discomforts which in its time also bore fruit. As both he himself and his sister have told us, one of the most terrible features of life at Forlorn Lodge was the conviction of having been abandoned —a conviction out of which the Demon Boy, once he discovered it, made useful capital. Parents had seemed kind, loving and provident; now suddenly they backed out of their responsibilities and left one to—this. It was the great betrayal; and from it developed a distrust of all mankind which Kipling was never quite to live down and which, inasmuch as suspicion engenders suspicion, was responsible for much of the dislike with which he was sometimes received. To be suddenly and for no apparent reason cast into hell and left there is an experience few of us fortunately are called upon to undergo—at least until a stage of life when a developed reason may come to the rescue and suggest that things cannot possibly be as bad as they seem. Its effect upon a child of six or seven is likely to be ineradicable. It was never eradicated from Kipling.

This distrust was not, of course, without its beneficial side; it kept him level-headed, cautious and balanced, looking all gift horses very carefully in the mouth. It preserved him from an over-satisfaction in his London conquest which, at

his age, might have led to fatal results. It informed him that fortune is at all times fickle and that reputations rise—and fall. In "If" (a poem he came to dislike very cordially) he advises the disciple to "meet with Triumph and Disaster and treat these two impostors just the same"; throughout a life which involved liberal alternations of both, he adhered to this clear-sighted doctrine. Southsea and Westward Ho!, whatever else they had done, had provided experiences that left him wary and alert with a cautious appreciation of the uncertainty of fortune and an actuarial awareness of values.

The positive or active product of all this emerged in Kipling in the form of his creed of independence—of owning oneself. The mental link is not difficult to supply. "This has happened to me," the child may reason, "because I am under the command of others; because I am not my own master I am obliged to herd with persons whom I dislike; because I am dependent on others I am betrayed and cast into slavery. Let me therefore see to it that, as soon as may be, others no longer command me or direct me; that I command, own and direct myself." With Kipling this principle took practical form in his refusal to contract or commit himself ahead; from time to time he refused dazzling offers for future work because their acceptance would have implied an obligation to produce it. When Henley began to refer to his new genius as "one of my boys" Kipling broke with him for ever. In *Something of Myself* the "ambitious young" are commended to the text from Ecclesiasticus—"As long as thou livest and hast breath in thee, give not thyself over to any"; and on so red-letter an occasion as his Rectorial address to the students of St. Andrews University, he singled out this topic—independence, owning oneself—as his theme. He developed it *in extenso;* for his belly's sake man is obliged to live with the tribe and if he desires—as he should and must desire—to escape from them, he must provide himself with iron rations. This involves hard labour but—"at any price

that I can pay, let me own myself." It was a doctrine calculated to appeal to his audience of Scots youths and maidens; it was also in consonance with his own (or Caroline's) careful and judicious management of his affairs. The principle of independence was ever very near to Kipling's heart; and it is surely not fanciful to trace its origin to Black Sheep or Beetle writhing in discomfort or worse and vowing "Never shall it be in the power of anyone to do this to me again!"

To carry this conception to its logical conclusion, Kipling should have been impervious alike to praise or to blame; and this, no doubt, is what he set out to be. "Gigger" at Westward Ho! (says Beresford) "objected to your criticism, whichever way it was." The adult Gigger was, however, sufficiently human to be able, in gross instances at least, to take offence. He was in truth an artist; privacy complex or no privacy complex, he had need for that recognition without which the artist cannot live. The onslaughts of the critics—which were often, as we have seen, bitter enough and outspoken enough in all conscience—he could bear with equanimity, taking refuge in his own conviction that the work was good and acceptable to that mystic Deity on whose altar he offered it up. But he had the real artist's furious hatred of the incompetent imitator. The incompetent imitator must needs proceed from the assumption that his work is comparable in merit to the original; and the public who accept or are deceived by the imposture must be presumed incapable of detecting any difference between the two. *Margaritae ante porcos;* it is a poor reward for the endeavours of genius; and if the incompetent imitator shows up the real lustre of the pearls, he as clearly indicates the undiscriminating nature of the swine. Tarzan, for instance, was always a thorn in Kipling's flesh; for viewed by the standard of popularity, Tarzan was as *popular* as Mowgli. It vexed Kipling to find attributed to himself throughout well-meaning messes and wardrooms a poem concerning the Green Eye of the Little Yellow God—of which, presumably, he had a low opinion.

And the famous (and indeed incredibly culpable) blunder of *The Times* over "The Old Volunteer"—a fake which, according to Kipling, "should not have deceived a messenger-boy"—reduced him to such reasonless fury that he hinted at a conspiracy on the part of the Jews. (If Sir George MacMunn quotes correctly, he had some reason for his rage: "We were ready in the 'nineties When the call rang clear For the yeomen and the gentlemen To volunteer"—may be magnificent but it is hardly Kipling.) Let us rejoice, however, in these weaknesses which present us with a figure at once more understandable and more likeable than the coldly practical exponent of self-ownership; here is a human being, susceptible, like the rest of us, to those horrid wounds that lacerate self-conceit. How bitterly he must have been enraged—as would any man in his place—by the 1900 tripper in the Rottingdean churchyard who inquired reverently "where Rudyard Kipling was laid"; how justifiably infuriated by that even more fatuous sightseer who wished to be directed to the house of "Rupert Gilpin." Kipling was well aware of his own value; he was as uncompromisingly contemptuous of the ambitious cadger as of the incompetent imitator. When Professor Dowden, Swinburne and William Watson besought him for "songs for the Unionists in Ireland," he replied bluntly that "the Irish Unionists need drilling a damned sight more than doggerel." And when the youthful editor of the Horsmonden School Magazine wrote, not too tactfully, to request a contribution, he was told that he appeared to possess "all the cheek that was in the least likely to do him good in this world or the next," and he was fobbed off—perhaps not unhelpfully—with a series of tactical maxims for use in schoolboy warfare. (The undaunted young gentlemen solaced themselves, however, by appealing to Max Beerbohm who agreed with them that Kipling's reply was "monstrous and unpardonable" and sent them a very poor caricature of the offender for publication in their next issue.)

The Kipling, then, who went out to India at seventeen was a born preacher or prophet so far unendurably suppressed and frustrated by the lack of permission to own himself; the move to India released him at a blow into full self-ownership in a world of breath-taking radiance and diversity. New types presented themselves for his judgment, new questions were asked to which, he felt, he should instinctively know the answer; to these an answer must be sought, or, if the search were too irksome, must at any rate be *given*. Meanwhile he must whenever possible, " find out." As regards Kipling's ingrained curiosity as to facts, let a humble observer be heard: " He had the darnedest mind," said Dave Carey, baggage-master at Brattleboro railway station, " he wanted to know everything about everything and he never forgot what you told him." That consuming inquisitiveness was in him long before he saw either Brattleboro or Dave Carey, and the effect of India was to enhance it to an obsession. For, to the inquisitive nature cursed with the urge to be " in the know," India is a dream country. It has the merit of being practically inexhaustible; it provides the most satisfying form of question—that to which there is *no* answer; its tabus and its silences, its inaccessible Holies of Holies and its silkily false evasions tantalize the investigator to the point of fury. The phrase " he knows all the answers " belongs to a later coinage in the currency of popular speech; but in those days the man who knew all the answers would have been, if not Kipling's god, at least his *guru*. It was a part of Lockwood Kipling's fascination that he knew so many of them. But—to penetrate behind the veil, to subscribe to the tabu, to exchange the secret password when the fingers were laid upon the lips—therein, it seemed to Kipling, lay the delight of delights and the consummation of wisdom. All through his life he yearned, with a persistence that survived more than one disappointment, to join some sort of Society, to be Initiate, to be a Member. That he became a Freemason as

early as possible goes without saying: he could not *not* have been a Mason. Yet it is worth noting that for all his constant parade of Masonry and his endless allusions to its ritual, he does not seem to have pursued the Craft into its higher stages: the fact of initiation, the knowing of the words, the sharing of the esoteric secrets—these, it would seem, contented and sufficed. He was " in the know."

Was there any general answer to which the thousand riddles of India might lead? Emphatically, yes. For paradoxically as it would seem, this land of unanswered and unanswerable enigmas presents on its surface a pattern of complete and interwoven order. It presented this pattern very clearly and impressively to Rudyard Kipling. It was indeed the sort of country he might have devised for himself; inasmuch as in India each individual was specifically attached to a place, in which he performed a function, to which he contributed a duty. The result was not so much a machine as a regiment presided over and directed by some dominant, gigantic and yet unstable colonel who was at all times capable of conflicting orders and contradictory tactics. Yet India was a system—or rather a galaxy of systems—which worked. There was first the Army, proceeding from an unquestioning obedience to direct orders. There was next the Indian Civil Service—and to a minor degree all the other services—proceeding less from the observance of direct orders than from the observance of inherited and cherished convention. And there was finally the intensely close-knit structure of Hindu religion and society. Few intelligent observers of the Hindu system have been ready to condemn it wholesale; in its respect for the family bond a respect as practical in expression as it is devout in origin, in its conviction of the sanctities of decency and order, in its allotment by the method of caste of an unavoidable duty to each and an unalterable station in life, it has an immense amount to recommend it. Even had Kipling been a red-hot Fabian, a revolutionary firebrand, instead of

an anti-Gladstone, anti-Ripon, anti-Reform Conservative, such a system could hardly have failed to impress him. As it was, it not only impressed; it enchanted him; and he never quite grew out of the belief that it must present, by its very perfection, a microcosm of the world and life.

There was one word, it seemed, and one idea which would express all this patterned effectiveness and kaleidoscopic interplay—the concept of discipline. Wherever he looked, he saw men voluntarily or by traditional rigour subordinating their individualities to an imperative which they perhaps but remotely understood. It was as if they obeyed—in very diverse manners but with an agreed absence of question—a universal law. But what *was* this law? Private Ortheris told him it was battalion orders; Orde and Tallantire spoke —under pressure—of "the traditions of the Service"; Mahbub Ali said it was the Will of Allah which was inscrutable, inevitable and final; Ram Das referred him to the Puranas which laid down regulations for correct conduct and the good life. Manifestly, battalion orders and the Puranas contained irreconcilable differences; as manifestly the Will of Allah had little to do with the traditions of the Service. Yet it was also plain that if one spoke resolutely about "the Law," one said something which was at once comprehensible to Ortheris, Tallantire, Ram Das and Mahbub Ali. Kipling therefore began to speak resolutely about "the Law." He left it there; he made no attempt to particularize or reconcile; he contented himself with appealing to a generalization which appeared to underlie every detail in this complicated system of networks called India. His "Law" of course had no more value than any other general term which can be variously defined in varying circumstances—"God" or "evil" or "space" or "Socialism"; but it was not in Kipling's nature to pursue his question beyond the immediate answer or to think matters out further than was implied in the purpose for the moment on hand. He coined the expression therefore and used it as a constant of vague significance for

the rest of his life. What is to be noted for present purposes is that he found the expression—and the idea behind it—in India.

Side by side with the conception of the law, India instilled into Kipling the germs of his theory of work. Man's aim in India it seemed to him—and indeed anywhere else—is efficiency, for if we have not given India efficiency we have given her nothing and there is no excuse for Orde and Tallantire at all. Which is absurd. But efficiency can be expressed only in action—in doing something; it is necessary, therefore, for the soul of every man that he should have a definite task to perform and that he should make the due execution of that task his aim and his glory. In the Indian services everyone has such a task and the tasks are in general outline similar; more shop is therefore talked in Indian clubs and bungalows than in any other region of the earth's surface and efficient performance is correspondingly glorified. It is easy in India to set up a philosophy in which efficiency is the god and work his handmaiden. Yet efficiency and the performance of the day's work will not altogether suffice; man is a lonely and insignificant atom immersed in an indifferent universe which may be—and very likely is—a dream in the mind of Brahm. Man's work therefore—even his most fruitful and successful work—must eventually carry in its train the annihilating factor of disillusionment; against this he must arm himself with some sort of resource. He can find that resource only within himself because the universe of Brahm's indifferent dream will provide him with nothing beyond material and phenomena. Man's ultimate satisfaction will therefore derive not from overcoming the universe or even permanently affecting it—for both these aims are for ever beyond him—but in defying it, in doing his appointed work so well that it cannot possibly score off him, in laughing at it whenever and however he can, in refusing to allow it to defeat his spirit. At the same time he must, for his self-respect's sake,

perform his appointed task and perform it efficiently. For work both *does* something and *is* something; it is both a task to an end and an offering to an ideal, and in either aspect it is one of man's resources against the universe. This philosophy—which is not necessarily depressing—Kipling almost certainly evolved in India; true to his habit, he did not enunciate it till long afterwards—if indeed the word "enunciation" can be applied to that curious and obscure story "The Children of the Zodiac." But it peers forth at us constantly—in his stories, in his poems, in his speeches, to a certain extent in the way in which he lived his life.

In his theory of work as the function-cum-offering-cum-salvation, Kipling had already taken several steps in the direction of that cloudy mysticism which life in India seems inevitably to engender. A certain vagueness, a canker of uncertainty, in time assails all residents between Kabul and Comorin; perhaps that is why the best books on the country have after all been written by those who spent the least of their time in it. To the new arrival the fundamental truths about India stand out as clear and self-revealing as the diamond sunshine; he will laugh at the older hands who warn him that in process of time his mind will become no better than a shifting quicksand of suspicions. Yet it is so; that brilliant cold-weather sunshine is succeeded in due course by a mental monsoon in which all is darkened over by sodden and billowing cloud; the deadly doctrine of *Maya* draws across all reality its grey and smothering film. Kipling did not stay in India long enough to reach this unhappy—and enduring—condition; but there are signs that he was drifting towards it. These may not be evident in the stories he wrote while actually in the country, for these possess—whatever else—a system of clear-cut values; but then Kipling was a vessel which came but slowly to the boil; that involved metaphysical essay "The Bridge-Builders" must have been in his mind long before it appeared in print. The Kipling who left India at twenty-four can only have been less cock-

sure, less certain, less fully armed with patent and unquestionable truths than the Kipling who arrived there at seventeen; the possibility of doubt—and of doubt on all sorts of subjects—was already implanted in his mind. And in one sense and from one angle the whole story of Kipling's life is the story of the transition from one state to the other, from the state of certainty to the state of doubt.

In Kipling the narcotics of India had hardly time to take effect; quite probably, had his life run on unchallenged, the London conquests would have wiped them out and restored him to the old confidence and certitude. But life did not run on unchallenged. If India had put into him the possibility of doubt, that experience was to be followed, within a very few years, by another which shook to the foundation his earlier mood of infallibility, and thrust him groping into that other half of himself which India had made ready to receive him. That experience was, of course, the years at Naulakha, Brattleboro, Vermont, and their terrible culmination in New York. Whatever picture we may conceive of Kipling during his Middle Period—the period from the opening of this century to the First World War, the period immediately following his years in America—it must be a picture of a man tormented by doubt and betrayed by disillusion. Here is a man who has temporarily lost his bearing, who has dragged his anchor and is drifting as aimlessly and habitually as ever did the *Carrie Pitman* on the Newfoundland Banks. As a writer he has dried up, he has lost his touch. Just as he shuttled from England to South Africa and back, anxious to find settlement but finding it in neither, so he flits from experiment to experiment in his writing, satisfied, it would seem, with none of them.

He had indeed good cause to be unsettled. His case in those days was not unlike that of Job whose sufferings had been the subject of one of his earliest poems; he had been dowered—nay, as he was the first to admit, he had been *favoured*—with unprecedented mercies and he had been as

savagely struck. It was a second betrayal; once more he was Black Sheep incredibly abandoned in the house of the Demon Boy. Confidently seeking a new home, he was flung out of it with every circumstance of ignominy; trusting to his encouraging gods that all would continue to go well, he was suddenly confronted with intolerable tragedy and bereavement. If this had happened once, it might well happen again; he walked shakily with one eye open for the next blow. That blow was surely delivered in due course; yet perhaps it fell many times in his mind before the actual event. Kipling was certainly superstitious and probably—although he was at pains to deny it—what is curiously called "psychic"; he had inherited—though to a lesser degree than his mother and his sister—the Macdonald gift of second sight, and it was a possession he enjoyed uneasily and in some trepidation. It is a subject on which he has been even more reticent than usual, but India has a story that he dabbled in black magic (in the House of Suddhoo?) and was bitten and gave it up hastily; and that thereafter both he and his father discouraged strongly any further "psychic" experiments on the part of Trix or any continuation of her rather advanced "fortune-telling." But the gift of "the sight" is one that cannot be rejected; it was an uncomfortable possession for a man radically stricken in his first conviction that he was the friend of the gods and that their friendship would continue.

Parallel, in these dark years, with the transition from confidence to doubt, from assurance to humility, there goes another symptomatic of the same malaise—the transition in his mind and in his writings from soldiers to doctors. In the place of Bobby Wick at Mian Mir we now encounter Keede M.D. at St. Peggotty's. The step may have been the more easily taken because Kipling had always been interested in infirmities and inclined to magnify them in himself; he was no coward over pain but, in the expressive words of his sister, he "savoured it through and through." Indeed, at the age of sixteen he had some hankerings after a medical

career; these were terminated by an operation at which he fainted and a case of labour at which he was sick. All things therefore considered, it is not surprising that there dates from the fatal visit to America in 1899 a growing preoccupation not only with infirmity but with pathological states. To quote merely an example, no careful student of his later work can have failed to note his increasing and detailed interest in the subject of cancer. He comes back to it time and again in his stories—" The Wish House," " Unprofessional " and " The Children of the Zodiac "—and in his verses—" Rahere " and " Late Came the God." Quite manifestly it was a fear that walked very closely by his side. Yet it was a fear for which there was no obvious foundation. No near relative ever succumbed to the disease or suffered from it; he did not suffer from it himself. It is true that towards the end of his life he contracted a duodenal ulcer; he may have had warnings of this which he took for the symptoms of a still graver malady. More probably, however, the obsession was but a manifestation of a deeper and more elementary terror, a bogy born of that old defensive distrust in life which had now become almost a distrust in God.

Side by side with this absorption in pathological details of the body, there marches a similar preoccupation with pathological conditions of the mind. He had always been interested in these too; *Departmental Ditties* has a poem on delirium tremens which is in a way classic of its kind. There is the very early story of John Hay, the Wandering Jew, and the rather later one of Dowse on the Wurlee Light who saw everything in longitudinal streaks till they drove him mad. But these may well have come from hearsay or observation. Cases of delirium tremens are unfortunately far from unknown among the more convivial members of the Indian station, and it is usually, in that country, the friend or neighbour who is obliged to stand by and see the patient through his *nuit blanche*. And the story of the unhappy Dowse (" A Disturber of Traffic ") may well have been founded on

narrated fact. But the preoccupation with madness or incipient madness grows and grows rapidly; each of the later collections contains at least one story which turns solely and directly on a diseased or faltering nervous system. One could cite "The Dog Hervey," "In the Same Boat," "The Prophet and the Country," "The Woman in his Life." There seems no doubt that after the American interlude with its humiliations and disasters his mind took a downward turn, a graveward turn, and that while he strove at times to lift it towards the light—perhaps he strove always *consciously* towards the light—his inner nature became best satisfied and he became in fact happiest with himself when he was following those darker paths that lead into the unseen and the unknown. Obscurity of speech quite naturally accompanied these journeys; they led him along tracks and through a country which he himself saw but dimly and imperfectly; small wonder then that the reader gropes after him sometimes almost in despair.

So much then for some of the main causes and directives in Kipling's life and their effects. Are there any other points which should interest us at this stage—characteristics, that is to say, which can be said to derive more or less directly from incidents in his life or from the way in which he chose to live it? There are several and they will fit generally into the picture we are assembling.

In the first place, perhaps, that bugbear of the nineteen-twenties and of all the clever inter-war young men—Kipling's "Imperialism." No aspect of his complex personality has been more faithfully criticized; it has not always been as faithfully understood. It was in itself more complex than has generally been supposed. It sprang fundamentally from something in himself; contrary to common belief, he imbibed little of it at Westward Ho! where the idea of Empire was rather systematically denigrated and where King waxed exceeding sarcastic over Beaconsfield and his "Empress of India"; but almost every activity in his subsequent career

contributed its quota. India—of course; those extended voyages to the ends of the earth; even, by the challenge and contrast they offered, Vermont and Sussex. It is essential to remember that by the time he was thirty Kipling had seen with his own eyes every continent in the world; and that, while such experience is by no means common even to-day, it was at the opening of his century specifically rare. It was possible therefore for Ulysses-Kipling to conceive himself as inspired with a message based on individual and abnormal experience —a message which would be regarded to-day as merely platitudinous and to which a great cloud of witnesses would be ready to testify. At the beginning of the century Kipling did almost uniquely see the Empire as a whole whose parts should be brought into closer communion; and the temptation to don the mantle of the prophet was more than he could resist. "I have done my best," he told the Canada Club in Winnipeg (in 1907), "to make all the men of the sister nations within the Empire interested in each other"; and this indeed was a fair statement of his aim. Was this "Imperialism"? If so, what was wrong with it?

The share of India in Kipling's "Imperialism" is of course obvious. We have noticed how the spectacle of Orde and Tallantire advising, instructing and directing the Real Indians inspired the concept of the Law; very much of Kipling's "Imperialism" was merely the expansion of this concept and its application to realms beyond the bounds of India. That this was a somewhat naive and uncritical application is beside the present point. Yet even Kipling until he made that voyage of discovery en route from India to London, had not realized quite how vast and exciting and wonderful this "Empire" was. He desired to convey and pass on this newly acquired enlightenment. Arrived in London, he turned over these glories in his mind and they coalesced into that project—never more than indirectly fulfilled—of a "conspectus of the whole sweep and meaning of things and of effort and origin throughout the Empire."

This ambitious scheme lay fallow throughout the Vermont period but—as visitors found to their cost who dared to question or deride its premises—there were frequent stirrings and rumblings of the subterranean forces. The Americans, then as now, were far more keenly interested in the British Empire than were the British themselves; their interest was alike more lively and more critical, and was sharpened at the moment by a certain amount of political antagonism; nor was the notion of empire *per se* any more attractive to the contemporary American than it is to-day. One may assume that Ulysses-Kipling, fresh from the Seven Seas, found frequent occasion to debate the subject with his guests at Naulakha and to sharpen his own conceptions at the same time; indeed we hear of at least one occasion when it was debated with such heat that the host ungraciously rose and left the table in a temper. (It must have been a particularly violent argument, for such a breach of manners and decorum was quite foreign to his nature.) His American friends must have helped him in the course of these arguments to formulate and regiment his ideas; they must have helped him to prepare the case for the defence, a case whose outlines were already in his mind. Isolationism versus Imperialism—it was a straight issue; and Isolationism in a small and single world united and systematized by an all-pervading Law—as Kipling had seen this world to be—was impossible. He came back to England, therefore, fuller of the subject than when he left; and England more than India, more even than America, made it imperative that his feelings should find voice.

This was in no way surprising; it was indeed natural. In the garden of roses into whose cool and scented bowers the returned wanderer was invited there was one conspicuous thorn; in the soft bed of cushions on which he was now implored to recline there was one irritating intrusion; the pea in the Hans Andersen story was not wanting. The British people—this was the thorn, this the pea among the feather

beds—took no interest in their Empire. Kipling, in the late 'nineties and the early ninteeen-hundreds was in the same position in which the enthusiast for the British Commonwealth of Nations finds himself to-day; he was confronted with a blank wall of uninterest, he was met with the response, "Oh, yes, of course—the Empire," followed by a hasty change of subject. Worse still; he may have encountered the beginnings of a doctrine—since more loudly and openly canvassed—that the Empire was in some way shameful. Orde and Tallantire, it seemed, were "exploiting" the Real Indians, as their fathers and grandfathers had done before them; and the selfsame process of exploitation and oppression and grabbery was going on wherever the flag flew. It was quite obvious that Kipling, with his background and his training, his first-hand knowledge and political beliefs could not allow so false and so pernicious a doctrine to pass unchallenged. He challenged it—strongly—and made himself—strongly—disliked.

For in assailing this heresy, in exhibiting their Empire, that "conspectus of the whole sweep and meaning of things," to its owners, he was obliged to unmask another infuriating trait of these new British amongst whom his lot was now so resolutely cast. They would not take any interest in their Empire—or at least they would not admit to any; but they were at the same time maddeningly complacent in regard to its splendours. That imaginary response, "Oh, yes, of course—the Empire!" almost exactly expresses their frame of mind. They declined to examine their Empire or study it or even discuss it; but they comfortably accepted it as a fact. They had no intention of doing anything whatsoever to serve it, they would take no active steps to further its development; yet they were placidly assured that it would continue. Now Kipling had not voyaged the Seven Seas, he had not talked with the Hat-marked Caste in one Ultima Thule or another without realizing that this was a highly dangerous illusion. The Empire would not necessarily go on; unserved, un-

cherished, unnoticed, the Empire would either collapse or secede and whichever of these alternatives it followed, the position of the home country would be markedly the worse. If, as Kipling fervently believed, the Law still ran and the Empire was not only a duty and a responsibility but a direct and God-sent means of salvation, then it was time to assume the mantle of a Jeremiah and speak plainly from the house-tops. It was time to rouse indifference, it was time to shake complacency. To this task Kipling set himself in language as vigorous as he could command. He drew pictures—brilliantly coloured pictures full of life and movement—and he dangled them before the half-closed eyes of his audience. He wooed their somnolent ears with song, he composed tunes in which the surge of distant seas blent with the voices of the winds that fluttered distant flags. Palm and Pine were conjured into suburban gardens and provincial meadows. And to these kinder methods he added plain and simple castigation—the lash of a verbal whip guaranteed to cut through the toughest and most hardened hide. His reward was bitter resentment, an opprobrium which his name and his memory could not live down and the reputation almost of a Dictator. Seven months after his death the B.B.C. dared not put on "Brugglesmith" without an apologetic announcement to the effect that it was a story "meant to make people laugh": "*there is no suggestion of the White Man's Burden or far-flung Imperialism.*" I have allowed myself the italics.

It was part of Kipling's good fortune that he frequently contrived to arrive in the right place at the right time. The gods now arranged that his return to England should coincide with the celebration of the Jubilee of 1897, Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Those magnificent and resounding syllables denote to-day the end of an epoch; but they commemorate also an hour in which home-based complacency in regard to the Empire together with self-satisfied ignorance of its realities achieved an all-time maximum. The cringing apologist

for the Empire—or its active assailant—was yet to be born; and though Kipling lived indeed to break a lance with the Little Englander, the attack which gained him the label of "Imperialist" (with all its attendant stigmata) was launched against the earlier undesirable—the cheering spectator of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee or of the C.I.V.'s march to the Guildhall. It was *his* fatuous self-satisfaction and complacency that Kipling strove to correct, improving the occasions first of the Jubilee celebrations themselves with their deafening fanfare on "England's greatness, England's glory," and next of the South African War with its "Soldiers of the Queen" who "always won"—at any rate in the music-halls and despite the daily paper's intimations to the contrary. The former drew forth the measured warning of "Recessional"—a poem whose spirit has been constantly and often deliberately misunderstood; the latter served as a text for many minor admonitions, culminating in the celebrated and outspoken "flannelled fools."

Apart from the fact that the Victorians, nursed on Tennyson and his "fifty years of ever-widening Empire," were unaccustomed to home truths or to verbal chastisement in any shape or form, it is a little difficult to account for the venom with which they received the Lamentations of the new prophet. It is true that his language was at times direct and realistic; but his message on the whole was mild and reasonable enough. "Do not boast about your Empire," he said, "without first trying to understand what it means; do not make lofty speeches about its grandeur before you have contributed something to its being. Believe me, it will repay investigation, it will even repay service." As to the South African War, "we have had a jolly good lesson and it jolly well serves us right"; Kipling hoped so fervently that this lesson would be learnt and perceived, that his C.I.V. returning to Hackneystadt would see that somewhat uninviting homestead in a new light; that he would perhaps be dissatisfied with it and moved to improve it; that he would at

least strive to correlate it with the new and abundant horizons he had lately visited. So did the dreamers of a later generation envisage a Land Fit for Heroes to Live in; and perhaps it is a dream which will be repeated yet again. In point of fact the returned C.I.V. was content to find Hackneystadt much as he had left it; the old Thamesfontein was good enough for him; and in the silence of his contentment the only voice heard was the voice of the serpent whispering that Kipling was a liar and an upstart, that we had given the Boers a raw deal, that we had given the Italians a raw deal, that we had given the Fiji Islanders a raw deal—that the Empire was a raw deal altogether. Was Kipling to be blamed in these circumstances, for feeling—and voicing—disappointment or, like Otis Yeere, "damning the collective eyes" of this perverse people "for a set of *haramzadas*?" If ear was given to the voice of the serpent, translating his "conspectus" into a glorification of exploiters and profiteers, big business, pukka Sahibs and beggar-my-neighbour; if his honest and sincere effort to display and attract and interest was written off (the serpent supplying the word) as "Jingoism"; was it not pardonable that he should feel aggrieved, disheartened and more than a little annoyed with "my amazing England"? Or that, in pursuance of his maxim, "Never explain," he should retire sulkily to the "bristling privacy" of Bateman's and leave his traducers a free field for such misrepresentations as they thought proper to devise?

The truth is that in the era which immediately succeeded the Boer War Kipling chose an unpropitious season in which to sell the Imperial idea at the hub of Empire. The pomp and circumstance of the 1897 Jubilee had impelled him to the sonorous remonstrance of "Recessional"; the Boer War impelled him to a glorification of the Dominions; in both cases he was out of touch with the sentiment of his audience. In 1897 humility, however desirable, was not the popular note; in 1902 Imperial glories, however manifest, were rather a sore subject. The Empire had done magni-

ficently in the Boer War—too magnificently. If it was an exaggeration to say that we " fawned on the younger nations for the men who could shoot and ride," it was so only because the generosity of these nations had made any fawning unnecessary; the men, the guns, the horses and the accomplishment were eagerly placed at our disposal. To the small-minded—and as the majority are small-minded, so in the last resort the national mind is always small—there is nothing more productive of dislike than service generously rendered, than timely rescue in an emergency. The Empire had done great things for the British nation and as a result the small mind of the British nation was—and would be for some time to come—anti-Empire. " I never realized," wrote Kipling sadly to a friend, " that the English of the Island were so genuinely vindictive against the English of the Empire." Moreover, popular education had made considerable strides since the last major war in which the British Government had involved its people; the man in the street was now interested in international movements and to some extent capable of interpreting and appreciating their meaning. The causes and considerations which led up to the Boer War, be they never so skilfully set out, made unsavoury reading; our part in them—to say nothing of the subsequent campaign—was hardly in accordance with that great and world-ruling race who had lined the streets in acclamation of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. In a weak case we had given an indifferent performance: there it was in a nutshell. Public opinion suffered from an angry suspicion—which it could perhaps hardly express—that " Empire " had got us into this mess with the Boers and " Empire " had got us out of it, and for both these reasons " Empire " was unpopular. Tormented by both these suspicions, it was ill disposed to applaud Dominion or to give three cheers for Palm and Pine. Kipling, singing the praises of Empire, sang out of season; and he paid for it.

He paid, quite certainly, too heavily; far too much has been made of his "Imperialism" by those with good political reasons for purveying a distorted version. There is much to be said for the view of the New York columnist twenty years later, who wrote, at a time when his countrymen were smarting under Kipling's criticism of their part in the last war—"What difference does it make if he is an insufferable Tory? He wrote the *Jungle Book*. Has everybody forgotten that?"

Let us pass therefore to another aspect of Kipling which directly resulted from the way in which his life was led. This has been called his "militarism." Not unjustly did Le Gallienne, criticizing *The Light that Failed*, describe its author as "a war correspondent in love with soldiers." There is no indication anywhere that Kipling himself in his young days ever yearned for the Army as a career—and even had he done so, his eyesight would have been, of course, a hopeless impediment; but much internal evidence could be cited to show that in his India days at least he looked upon the soldier as the king of men and his career as the summit of human desire and ambition. Now this was a not unnatural effect of India on—let us remind ourselves once more—a boy under twenty; it was in India that he first came in contact with soldiers in what Pyecroft would have called "puris naturalibus." Westward Ho! was of course a school for the sons of soldiers, and many of Cormell Price's pupils were designed for the Army; but the Army Class had no personal significance for Beetle and his holidays were passed in a cultured community whose generals and marshals were Morris, Burne-Jones and Ruskin. In India it was otherwise. There were no Ruskins and Morrises, and if there had been they would not have stood high in local and popular esteem; it was not only little Miss Venner who knew nothing about "howwid Wajahs" but "only knew that Captain Kerrington had won three races at the last Gymkhana."

India—or the India in which Kipling found himself—was a soldier's country. It was unfortunate in many ways for Kipling—and therefore for all of us—that his Indian lines were laid almost solely in the Punjab; apart from the fact that this was a newish province and rather loudly inclined to the nervous self-advertisement of the recently arrived, life within its borders meant life in military stations. These have their advantages no doubt; but they are extraordinarily unlike India. In the older and mellower south, which he so unthinkingly despised, Kipling might have compared and considered military Bangalore with non-military Madras, military Wellington with non-military Ootacamund, and might have reflected on the spectacle of a handful of small-scale military stations lost in a vast area where there were no soldiers at all and had not been since the days of Eyre Coote. Had he been given this opportunity, who knows to what fresh mental adventures and discoveries he might have been led? But in the Punjab this was virtually impossible; there even Orde and Tallantire, those heaven-born demigods, dwindled in power—as they could never compete in glory—when compared with Captain O'Neill or Colonel Crichton. And when a move was made to Simla, when a move was made to the Hills, then the apotheosis of the military was complete. Orde and Tallantire simply did not enter—or were at best represented by such miserable and slightly laughable substitutes as Barr-Saggott or Wressley of the Foreign Office; true, they remained nobly at their posts in cholera-ridden or disaffected areas, but—they rode no winners at the Gymkhana. Weakly and submissively they sent their wives to Simla, season after season, to succumb to the seductions of military Tertium Quids. At Lahore and in the Plains generally (so far as Kipling knew them, which was to a much more limited extent than is commonly supposed) the military led; in the Hills they were paramount. Small wonder then that a boy's admiration was fired; that it seemed to young Kipling, as it seemed to Bobby Wick, that

life held no higher distinction, no more desirable prize than the post of officer and gentleman in Her Majesty's Indian Army.

And indeed, boy or no boy, there was much to be said for this point of view. The Indian Army officer of the 'eighties was indeed a superb and a fortunate figure. Burma doubtless took the boy upon occasion and now and then the crammer's boast, the squadron's pride, was shot like a rabbit in a ride; but, taken by and large, the Indian Army officer was the complete nonpareil. He always won. Or if there were a temporary reverse, he came again, as did the Fore and Aft, and so redeemed himself that it was almost providential that the original setback should have occurred. In the mountains of Afghanistan he held the Pathans at bay and the Russians behind them; in the swamps of Moulmein he knocked Boh-da-Thone and his unsavoury compatriots for repeated sixes. In a hundred bazaars from Dum-Dum to Peshawar he presided as a potent and on the whole a benevolent demigod ready at all times to quell all sorts of trouble. And how beautifully he danced! Is it then to be wondered at that a young "war correspondent"—who incidentally saw no war, but only manœuvres—lured on the one hand by this picture of dash and glory, and on the other by the entrancing and eminently saleable narratives of Mulvaney, Ortheris and Learoyd—is it to be wondered at that such a one should tend to an exaltation of the soldier, the military life *and all that that implies*?

For, apart from these superficial glories, the soldier had a deeper significance which developed in Kipling's mind and remained there long after the wail of the Mian Mir bugles had died away on the wind of time. We have seen how India begat the notion of the Law. But the Law in itself posits some form of police. There must, in such a system, be some form of force to which appeal can be made when the Lesser Breeds become outrageous—even if it goes no further than banging rifle-butts on Wali Dad's toes. (It

should, indeed, and in a properly constituted world it would, never have to go further than this.) Man must be made Efficient but there are Lesser Breeds who will never be Efficient of their own volition; there must therefore be some sort of coercion and some sort of force to administer it. And when the Law expands to embrace an Empire, when the question of the White Man's Burden is canvassed, it became obvious that the force must be expanded too. It became obvious to Kipling—and incidentally at the same time to Lord Roberts—that if the Law were to be administered in peace and decency, the force must be expanded to a much greater degree than the British people as a whole were ready to contemplate. There must be more soldiers; apart from the fact that a term of Army service is good for the citizen—morally, physically and mentally—it is his plain duty; nay, more—he must undertake it to save his skin. That is what Kipling—and Lord Roberts—were trying to say; and though such a manifesto would excite little comment in 1945, it was a trifle revolutionary in 1900 when the honest burgess thought his duty well executed if he stood on the sidewalks and cheered a handful of C.I.V. on their way to embarkation. It was sufficiently so to earn Kipling the second opprobrious label of "militarist"; if the word "warmonger" had then been current, they would have called him that also.

A degree of "militarism," then, was an inevitable result of the lines along which Kipling's life was directed, of the cards that were dealt to him, between the ages of seventeen and thirty-five. He paid for it once again—cruelly. The grim realities first of the South African War and later of the First World War were to beat upon him like flails; like a boomerang that deification of the fighting man was to come crashing back upon his head. For Army service turned out to be not all fighting on the Indian Frontier or in Burma; the officer-sahibs did not always win or if they

succeeded in the end, did so only at frightful and irreplaceable cost. War as seen at first hand—in South Africa—was a very different story from those large-scale manœuvres in the course of which Mulvaney dilated on the Shadds and the Sheehys. There is no need to underline the gloomy sequence; the contribution of the South African War to that process of doubt, frustration and descent which began far away among the pastures of Vermont; the inevitable rise of the German menace; the blind confiding eyes that turned towards it and the enchanted ears that would hear no warning; the final blow where an only son, following the tradition of Bobby Wick, volunteering for the finest of all careers, disdaining staff appointments and striking out—as Bobby Wick would have done—for the Line, the whole Line and nothing but the Line, perished and was destroyed in an instant beyond even the recovery of his remains.

Let us turn from these grisly—and yet in a sense these not unmerited—punishments, and glance back to another aspect of his life, which modified Kipling's outlook and his writings and—so far as he was here in advance of his epoch—the reception these were accorded. He was, for his time and his years, amazingly travelled; and his travels had supplied him with a conviction, rare in those days as a matter of practical experience, that the world was after all a single place. Both in his "Imperialism" and in his conception of the Law, a unified and systematic world, not after all unmanageably vast or incomprehensibly exotic, played a significant part. It was a small world after all; a young man in his twenties could make enough money to run over the greater part of its surface. The same young man, by keeping his eyes open (as this young man invariably did) could see that just as Judy O'Grady and the Colonel's Lady were sisters under their skins, so the men of the world displayed unexpected likenesses throughout; they showed the same streaks of kindness, the same disconcerting patches of yellow; fundamentally they were interested in the same

things and the great majority of them made like reactions to like stimuli. That the facts of Khatmandu were the wildest dreams of Kew had nothing to do with the point; these were externals, trappings, conventional and variant expressions of some internal constant. It was a small world and every part of it was interlinked with every other part. Now such a conception was very much rarer—and less palatable—in the late 'nineties than is readily believable in the shrunken world of 1945. For when Kipling came to London, the distant scene was still distant; to cross the Channel was still an awfully big adventure; Africa and Asia hovered in a vast background, remote, dark and frightening. To a stay-at-home race believing in an immense and dangerous world, most of which was—perhaps fortunately—inaccessible, much of Kipling's gospel was rank heresy; it was difficult to receive with patience this jaunty young man who brought these Ultimae Thules and laid them on the dining-room table much in the same way as Aunt Jane came homing from her annual holiday with a vase labelled "A Present from Brighton." They were not prepared for his unified world—his Present from Brighton—and they did not altogether approve of it. If the world were all one piece, then where was the advantage in being British, where was the virtue in that consciously superior insularity on which we had always so justly prided ourselves? The crimes of Clapham *were* crimes and if they thought them chaste in Martaban—well, it just showed that Martaban—wherever it was—was a place to be avoided. The Kipling who thought nothing of a voyage to Singapore and then on to Australia or Japan was beyond the ken of a generation, some few of whose members perhaps visited France or Holland once in a lifetime, condemned *ex hypothesi* most of what they saw there, and were more often than not very greatly relieved to be returned safely to their homes at the end of the exploit.

But the phlegmatic apathy or active dissent of his audience was by no means the sole disillusionment brought to Kipling

by his travels. Through his world he wandered, mixing with so many and yet, somehow, failing to mix, failing to make himself liked. One hears, of course, many contrary stories; but for once that one is told of Kipling's personal charm, there are three or four complaints of " side," impatience, umbrage-taking, laying down the law. Here, as so often, Kipling was slain by his own internal contradictions. He longed to be taken in and accepted as a brother, he longed to possess an interminable gallery of friends who would tell him all the secrets of their lives; but at the same time he desired no intrusion on his privacy, no disturbance in the run of his own affairs; and the constant recognition of the fact that he was a Great Man. He would have told no one *his* secrets—no one on earth. As in Vermont, so everywhere he kept himself to himself on the high pinnacle of his self-esteem; he was accessible to acquaintances at his time and not theirs. In this Caroline, with her rather mistaken possessiveness, aided and abetted him; " they were a pair of hedgehogs," said an observant spectator, " but her spines were ever a shade quicker to rise than were his own." Hedgehogs make few friends. It must have puzzled Kipling —as it has puzzled many other egocentrics—why people did not like him better; he was going out of his way to amuse them, he was flattering and entertaining and charming them, he was giving them of his best; and they accepted it and—came no nearer. Wherever he went it was the same story; people would admire, extol, worship him; but they would rarely like him. There were times too when he was not really likeable. Edmund Wilson quotes, on the authority of Arnold Bennett, a story of how Kipling, in the days when he was a frequent traveller by the Union Castle Line, first picked the brains of the ship's officers for his own purposes and then, at the end of the voyage, reported them for flirting with the lady passengers. It is to be remembered that Bennett was no unbiased admirer of Kipling and the fault in any case may have been Caroline's who had an unfortunate

penchant for embroiling herself and others in petty feuds. But whoever was to blame, there is a nasty ring of possibility about that tale, an unpleasant echo of the Naulakha household at Brattleboro. It is—somehow—credible. One has a suspicion that Kipling, like many another, attempted the impossible combination; hail-fellowship one moment, dignity-standing the next. It is a programme which nobody—not even a Kipling—can carry through.

It is possible that the resulting disillusionment and chagrin appear in Kipling's work. Edmund Wilson has pointed out that in the middle Kipling period there comes a time when he is pre-occupied, to the exclusion of humanity, with things inhuman—with insects, animals and machines; Wilson suggests that this is due to his " need to find characters which will yield themselves unresistingly to being presented as parts of a system." (The idea of a system in which all worked by order and design, a sort of development of the Law, being now, according to Wilson, uppermost in Kipling's mind.) It is questionable whether Kipling in the " middle " period was more noticeably addicted to animals or to mechanical gadgets than at any other time of his career; but if it were so, if he did indeed turn to writing about these " unresisting " objects, and if this were anything more than an experiment in technique, may it not as well have been because he was increasingly weary of his fellow men? They refused to accept him as an intimate, they spat upon his ideals and his teachings; with the fury of those whose consciences are soundly pricked they jeered at his dearest beliefs—the Law, the Empire, the White Man's Burden, the Lodge of the Right People. Away with them, then; rather let us write about tank-engines and ships that find themselves and the economics of the beehive. If this diagnosis be sound, the malady may well have been a fruit of those interminable journeys—posting on always in search of a welcome and finding nothing but fame.

To depict Kipling as a self-enveloped nomad whose days

were governed by a succession of moves and a succession of moods is another way of presenting the conception of his life which he himself expressed by saying that he had only to play the cards dealt to him. His life was essentially a series of deals; card succeeded card from the hand of the dealer and they were not always cards of the same suit or sometimes even from the same pack. They were not cards which combined readily into a hand, and in so disjointed a life it is difficult to find a continuous thread or even a continuous character; as the card changes, so it seems does the player. Still—the life suited him, or he suited himself to it: he became uncomfortable when the dealer delayed too long between one card and the next. For although he struck out for himself, forming his own destiny, Never Going Back the Way He Came, it was in his nature to look for and wait for a lead. In *Something of Myself* and elsewhere his semi-superstitious attitude to his fortunes is lightly and jokingly put but it may not have been a light or joking matter to himself: perhaps he did believe in a dealer and in the luck of the game. In "The City of Dreadful Night," the young newspaper-man going out for a walk at midnight sets up his stick to see which way it may fall and when it falls he follows the direction in which it points. It was a method to which Kipling trusted in graver matters than a midnight ramble round Lahore.

All this again fits in with a quality we have already emphasized—his refusal to use his mind to think things out finally for himself. He accepted the card dealt to him and he played it, but that card was then played once and for all, and there was nothing to do but to await the next. There were no post-mortems at his card-table; when the stick had fallen, it had fallen. When his mind was made up—and it was very easily made up—there was no further argument; the decision made then took its place in what he called his knowledge. Excuse must here be made for the temptation which besets the imaginative writer; for these gifted creatures

it is always easier to invent than to ascertain; facts—and in these we must include the facts of reason, of logic and of ethics—are irksome things, crabbing and confining the possibilities of fancy. Kipling shrank from exploration in the world of ideas as much as he delighted in it in the world of geography; he sought always the quick answer which would allow him to pass on to something else, to assemble the necessary facts and then throw upon them the unsurpassable colourings of his imagination, assuring himself meantime that he had secured all the answer or at any rate all the answer that was of any consequence. He did not care to cross-examine himself and he was very short under the cross-examination or contradiction of others. In a word he was bored with reality—or with such reality as entailed the hard labour of excavation. Let us by all means be informed; but it is sufficient to know, let us say, that the driver sets the motor-car in motion by thrusting the gear-lever into a certain notch and depressing the clutch and accelerator pedals; we need not advance into dynamics or the chemistry of petrol or a detailed specification of the internal combustion engine. It may be necessary in a story that a driver should start his car and it may be necessary for the sake of verisimilitude that he do so in exact detail; but all that matters is what he does and not why he does it. All the imaginative writer requires of truth is a sufficient basis for lies; a string of working hypotheses will serve him for "knowledge" so long as he can believe in them himself; more is useless or worse for it can only introduce into his mind that element of doubt which will then unfailingly invade and destroy the story. Let us not therefore be too hard upon Kipling because he failed to follow out his ideas or to seek any but the short answer. He had the best of reasons to "know" so much and no more, and to stand pat—for the story's sake—on what he "knew."

The Kipling whose work we are to examine now stands before us delineated in some detail; if there remain contra-

dictions in the picture—as there must and should remain in any authentic picture of Kipling—they are at least attributable to ascertained causes. We see a preacher—one might almost say a prophet—by birth and inclination; the hard-headed proselytizing North England Methodist confused but inspired by the mystic and superstitious Celt. He has a mission to instruct and from the outset he feels himself dowered by God with an exact, superior and detailed knowledge. His early upbringing is stormy, at times penitential; it instils in him a need for privacy and independence and a distrust in man which may become under suitable stimuli (duly provided in due course) the germ of a distrust in God. As is natural in a character so prone to contradictions, these early and difficult years instil also the converse of these phenomena; first, a yearning (which he is never able wholly to satisfy) to be accepted as a member in some—in any—cult, lodge or association, to be initiate, to be a sharer of secrets; and second, a faith (clung to with all the fervour wrought by tormenting suspicion of its credentials) that somewhere—perhaps in the high places of administration—there must exist a college of reliable and trustworthy supermen. But these secondary developments never wholly obscure the fundamental conviction that in the last resort one must Travel Alone and Walk by Oneself; one is one's own fortress—and its commander. For the rest, there is an intensely inquisitive mind—inquisitive often about trivialities and almost always superficially; a mind whose absorptive tendencies, amazingly strong by nature, are stimulated by contact at a still impressionable age with the kaleidoscope of the world. This in turn is interpreted, diffused, transformed by a blazingly brilliant imagination. It is a mind which seeks and is satisfied with the short answer, the factual answer, the answer which will provide the necessary minimum for imaginative embroidery; it is disinclined to pursue its discoveries or to probe beyond superficial causes. Noticeably undisciplined itself, it sets much store on the concept

of discipline; characteristically, it refuses to think out this concept but embodies it in a second concept more nebulous still—the Law. Regarding itself—under the appearance of jest but actually perhaps in some seriousness—as under the tutelage of God, it is dismayed by inevitable betrayal; and it passes with the years from a crystalline certainty to a shadowed but not by any means a despairing doubt.

The child in the House of Desolation; the schoolboy at Westward Ho!; the boy in India with his spooks and his soldiers; the most tragical comedy of Pan in Vermont; that resolutely anchored *arrive* the Hermit Crab of Bateman's. The Law; the glitter of Empire; Mine Own People who will not have me; the small oneness of the world. These seem to be the essential ingredients in Rudyard Kipling; these were the cards dealt him and in that order; with these laid out before us let us proceed to the consideration of his work.

PART TWO

THE PRODUCT

VI

THE CRITICAL ATTACK

"Criticism, through the mouth of Mr. Henry James in 1891, had said its last word on Mr. Kipling"

PHILIP GUEDALLA

IN considering the critical assault upon Kipling, there is one fact which must always be borne in mind; his critics are either very remote or very recent. His work was seriously reviewed by the minds best capable of addressing themselves to the task only during the heyday of his London conquest and after his death. Between these points there is an interval of nearly forty years during which the scope, objective and tempo of his work developed—or at least altered—in the most interesting manner, but during which there was no first-class criticism of what he was doing. Over this long period of years no leading literary critic thought Kipling's work worthy of a detailed examination; he was relegated to the occasional essay in the literary reviews. Kipling was read by multitudes; as has already been said, it would always have been possible, in a railway carriage or a club smoking-room, to start a well-informed argument on the respective merits of this or that story or poem; but the fact remains that for forty years responsible criticism knew him not. It was not till after his death that such writers as Edward Shanks or T. S. Eliot took him up for serious consideration.

It follows therefore that a great deal of the critical attack upon Kipling is still the critical attack of the 'nineties; this

is not only likely to be out-of-date but must necessarily be based upon the merest sample of his work. Gosse, writing in the *Century* in 1891, had nothing to go on except the Indian stories and *The Light that Failed*. Le Gallienne, in 1900, could add *The Naulahka*, the stories in *The Day's Work* and *Many Inventions*, *Captains Courageous*, the *Jungle Books* and *Stalky*, as well as *Barrack-room Ballads* and the *Seven Seas*. But he had no more than a faint foreshadowing of what is now being called the Middle Kipling and of the Late Kipling he had no sort of inkling at all. It is scarcely credible that if Gosse and Le Gallienne could return to life today they would not modify their views in the light of the further material lying to their hand. Yet the charges they and their confreres brought against Kipling in the 'nineties are still in the main those which are paraded against him today; and a vast body of varied and contradictory work has not enabled him to live them down. Never was an author so labelled and never was label furnished with such enduring gum.

It may be convenient to consider the critical attack upon Kipling under heads. In the first place there are a number of charges which spring not so much from his actual writing as from the nature and character of the man behind it; such charges as inconsistency, insincerity, brutality and Toryism. Then there is a second group—imitativeness, obscurity, " knowingness "—which are charges against the work itself. And lastly there are criticisms of his subject-matter—such as, for instance, his women, his politics, his humour.

One of the earliest complaints—it was made by Gosse and repeated by Le Gallienne and others in one form or another—was that Kipling had no real principles. It puzzled Le Gallienne that the same man could be responsible for the bitter and worldly cynicism of some of the *Plain Tales* and also for the fervent religiosity of " Recessional." How, he asked, is one to reconcile the Lord God of Hosts of the hymn (for it *is* a hymn) with the non-Christian tone

of Kipling's earlier writings? The "chapter heading" from "Lispeth"—"your cold Christ and tangled Trinities"—is written as if it came from the heart; yet so is the appeal to what is apparently a Christian—even if rather an Old Testament—deity to "be with us yet, Lest we forget." More than thirty years later, a writer in the *Passing Show* encountered the same dilemma; he passed it off light-heartedly by calling Kipling "a mixture of Isaiah and Mr. 'Enry 'Awkins." But Le Gallienne was too seriously perturbed to treat the problem with any such levity: he sought not labels but interpretations. He came to the conclusion that in his "vein of sacred imperialism" Kipling was not "consciously insincere" but that this vein was "at variance with the temper of the bulk of his work." (Let us once again remember that Le Gallienne was saying this in 1900 when the bulk of Kipling's work had yet to be written.) Gosse, nearly ten years earlier, and with even less to go on, had made a somewhat similar attack; pitching on the story of *Wee Willie Winkie* (which is indeed perhaps a rather nonsensical tale) he accused Kipling of being led away by sentiment and a false ideal; he pointed out—what is perfectly true—that Winkie's feats were incredible in a child of six and he concluded that Kipling was "not an honest craftsman." In other words, said both Le Gallienne and Gosse, Kipling wrote with his tongue in his cheek.

This charge of "insincerity" may well be placed in the forefront of the critical assault on Kipling because it is fundamental and basic. But surely it reveals an equally fundamental misconception of the art and the obligations of a writer of fiction; it indicates a lack in the critics of the very quality they are discussing in their subject—imagination. It was just because Kipling *was* a craftsman *and* an "honest craftsman" that we find these contending loyalties in his work. An honest craftsman will consider, above everything else, his craft; and the craft of a writer of fiction is simply this—to make a lie for the time being believable.

To this he must subordinate all other considerations. To call this "insincerity" is absurd; the only way in which an imaginative writer can be sincere is by being, for the moment, the character he is, for the moment, presenting. That is what Kipling achieved; and it is just this identification of himself with his subject and characters for the time being and this ability to identify himself with characters so diverse that has given his work its astounding and unique vitality. To insist here on "consistency" would be to insist that an imaginative writer should write the same story over and over again; and though this has frequently been done with considerable profit, the practice has rarely led in the end to high repute. A writer of Kipling's imaginative genius, who covered so wide a field, who was now Mulvaney, now Bagheera, now .007, must abound in contradictions—or apparent contradictions—of speech, attitude and principle. Ernest Newman, writing in *The Free Review* in 1893 and forsaking music for literature, saw this far more clearly than his fellow-critics; although, as he was accusing Kipling's characters of playing and posing, he does not seem to have perceived as clearly whither his thought was carrying him. "We have simply been deluded," he wrote, "by the same inner consciousness masquerading in many outer forms." Of course we had; there *were* many forms and the consciousness *was* masquerading. It was all "pose," said Newman: but —what else could it be? It is the part of a writer of imaginative fiction to let his consciousness masquerade for all it is worth; how then can he be called a "dishonest craftsman" for appearing in the motley it assumes, the exotic—and at times the contrary—roles into which it leads him? Is he not keeping his pact with integrity if—as was the case with Kipling ninety-nine times out of a hundred—he and his subject-matter *for the time being* are identified and one?

All this is not to deny that the hundredth occasion sometimes arose; Kipling could—and sometimes did—"write with his tongue in his cheek"; at least to the extent that he could

write *ad hoc*, for the occasion and—at least to his own—order. One cannot claim complete integrity for a writer who, to gratify the sentimentality of the American public, could allow Maisie, dragged back by Torpenhow from her art colony at Vitry-sur-Marne, to marry Dick Heldar—by implication at least—instead of rushing horrified from his rooms. Instances of *ad hoc* writing so contradictory that it is hard to ascribe to it even an ephemeral sincerity—can of course be brought against him. "Christmas in India" is a familiar poem representing the nostalgia of the exile in that country, and almost all Kipling's Anglo-Indians are "exiles"—a sentiment that in itself sat oddly on one who had exchanged Forlorn Lodge and Study Number Five for Bikaneer House. But no sooner did he move to London than he wrote the less familiar "In Partibus" which compares India with London very much to the advantage of the former: "But I am sick of London Town from Shepherd's Bush to Bow." To cite a still more blatant instance, he wrote—very soon after his arrival at Lahore and at least in semi-seriousness—a poem called "Song of an Outsider" in which he affects nostalgic longings for Westward Ho!; it is indeed difficult to believe that in all the circumstances this emotion could have been other than a conscious sham. But—we come back to where we started—what has the creative artist to do with integrity other than such integrity as will unite him *for the time being* to his story and its people or to the mood and spirit of his poem? More must not be asked of Kipling. If he were addressing himself to the task of composing a hymn to the Lord God of Hosts, he was for the time being a self-deprecating suppliant before the Throne; if the thesis laid down that Christmas in India was a tragic mockery, then he was a homesick exile; if adultery as practised in the Simla Hills were *ex hypothesi* a pastime unrewarding to its participants but amusing to the onlooker, then he was the observant and quizzical cynic. And so on.

The second quality in Kipling which most vexed Le Gallienne and his contemporaries was his "brutality." Le Gallienne hailed him as the captain in expression of the prevailing ideal of physical force. "Perhaps no one ever wrote so profanely of death as Mr. Kipling or with such heartless vulgarity." But then death is a heartless fellow and presents himself often under manners and guises which can scarcely be described as gentlemanly; more especially perhaps in India, where Kipling first met him. Kipling's appeal, thought Le Gallienne, was to the Englishman as brute and Philistine, and Gosse remarked plaintively that his Anglo-Indian social episodes were "not very refined." We may examine the foundations of this charge of brutality for brutality's sake; but as a preliminary there are two misconceptions which had better be cleared away.

The first of these is the supposition that Kipling's work made its successful impact because of the milk-and-watery condition of English fiction at the time. It has been fashionable to say that he broke like a blast of wind into Wilde's listlessly epigrammatic drawing-rooms and the epicene peccadilloes of the *Yellow Book*. So no doubt he did; but it is flat misrepresentation to cite these as the embodiment—or even as typical components—of story-writing in the 'nineties. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* was published in the same year as *Life's Handicap* and *The Light that Failed*, and whatever else has been said about *Tess*, it has rarely been called namby-pamby. In the next year—the year of *The Naulahka*—appeared *The Wrecker;* and if it comes to "brutality," the occurrences on board the *Flying Scud* after Captain Trent began his ill-advised and ill-fated exactions can hardly be described as milk-and-water. Nor was Gosse quite fair in saying that Kipling arrived *a propos* into a world of "curiously feminized" fiction to fill the void between the "burrows of self-consciousness" on the one hand and Haggard's "Mountains of the Moon" on the other. These were by no means the only alternatives then offered to the reader of fiction. The

Kipling stories did not succeed either because they were brutal or because they had a monopoly of this quality; they succeeded because they were new, first-class and amazingly readable. Certainly—as in the case of the Tertium Quid who was eventually buried in " eighteen inches of water instead of the twelve to which he had first objected "—the new author treated the deaths of respectable people with a novel irreverence and sang-froid; but in India Kipling had lived with death as a near neighbour—an acquaintance in the station and in the club, a daily associate in the narratives he imbibed from his soldiers. You do not impose a tabu on the mention of such a neighbour; you do not allow him to send you shivering into corners; you can even crack a joke about him. To the stay-at-home Englishman of the 'nineties, however, all this came as something of a shock; in the 'nineties death in its more unpleasant and violent forms was something to which the ordinary citizen was still unaccustomed; we have advanced greatly in our acquaintance since then. Would anyone today, toughened by such progressive novelties as the Luftwaffe and the Gestapo, select " brutality " as the outstanding characteristic of Kipling's Indian stories? If not, then Kipling's " brutality " must have lain less in his works themselves than in the sensitive natures and cushioned lives of those who read them.

The second misconception takes us back to Robert Louis Stevenson and the lurid history of *The Wrecker*. Stevenson was a lifelong invalid who by a natural compensation turned in his stories to deeds of physical violence. The same sort of compensation, it is contended, applied in Kipling's case; his poor eyesight debarred him from many of life's more active adventures, so he enjoyed them threefold with the inner sight of imagination. In real life violence is a public affair—there is the opponent bawling and thrusting, there are the spectators hurrying to gape; one cannot normally indulge in it without either joining or drawing a crowd. Kipling, shrinking back in real life into his shell of privacy, embroiled his characters

in compensatory homicides and holocausts. Either way, then, much of his "brutality" was bravado and this bravado—so runs the argument—was the outcome of early repression and fear. It was the compensatory process by which he took out of his characters what he had so long been unable to take out of his tormentors in the flesh: the house of the Demon Boy and the school of Molly Fairburn and Gobby Maunsell had bred between them a fear-complex so intense that only Pathan knives and murder-minded apes could resolve it. The exponents of this theory carry it to completion by suggesting that Kipling was by nature positively soft and tender and that this shield of what we should now call "toughness" was erected partly by the compensatory process for past wrongs but partly also as armour-plating to cover his vulnerable and sensitive core.

It would be foolish to assert that there is nothing in all this; but it would be equally foolish to call it the whole story. To begin with, as we have already had occasion to notice, Kipling's early sufferings were probably less acute and produced less deep and lasting results than is commonly supposed. He was in fact a self-reliant and sturdy boy who grew into a young man tolerably well able to take care of himself in anything where good sight was not essential. In his later years at Westward Ho! at any rate it is not unreasonable to suppose that he inflicted on others at least as much suffering as he endured. The theory of compensatory brutality must therefore be accepted with reservations. But if the brutality were not compensatory it must have been natural and innate; this is perhaps nearer to the truth. There is a revealing passage in *Something of Myself* which has been overlooked; therein Kipling records for us that as a child on holiday in the country he enjoyed "assisting at the slaughter of swine" and describes the maternal concern (not wholly unjustified) when he returned home "red-booted" from this pursuit. And there is a truly revolting picture, recorded for us by Beresford with loving detail, of "Gigger"

in Study Number Five with a frog on a plate still living but almost devoured by maggots which Gigger is enthusiastically extracting one by one with a pair of tweezers. Do not let us make too much of these juvenile abominations but let us at the same time admit that they do not strike one as the recreations of a really *nice* little boy—or of one who was afterwards to feel the need of a carapace of brutality to shield his innate tenderness of heart. In the London days Frank Harris recounts a description—which Kipling evidently gave with gusto—of some particularly horrible buffalo-and-tiger fights he had witnessed at the court of an Indian Rajah; he had apparently sat through a series of these; need he have done so if he had been specially anxious to be excused? There is no escaping from the almost loving detail of the Chicago pig- and cattle-slaughters in *From Sea to Sea,* while the unspeakable Gigger at his study dissections revives in the unnecessarily—but joyfully—disgusting poem appended to "The Mother Hive." The truth seems to be that there *was* a rough strain in Kipling; and the effect of the years at Forlorn Lodge and Westward Ho! was rather to coarsen and toughen this existing material than to weave fresh psychological mysteries within his being.

It would seem then that in supposing Kipling's "brutality" to be mainly bravado the interpreters were right; but in assuming this bravado to derive as compensation from a fear-repression complex they were wrong. Could they not then have taken it less seriously, have written it off as the bravado of a young man finding his feet and finding them a trifle too soon? In more ways than one young Kipling in India is reminiscent of Harvey Cheyne before he fell overboard from his liner; he too must essay the Wheeling "stogie." If this be so, Bertran and Bimi and the blood-curdlings of Mulvaney fall back into place as part of that "attention-damn-your-eyes" style which pained the *American Bookman.* After years of repression there is a fiendish pleasure in shouting the impossible, in speaking without

reverence of that which is sacred and with impudence of that which is abhorred; the same rather hasty clutching at manhood which begot the coldly amoral narrator of the Simla stories begot also their counterpart " tough " jesting at death or greeting him with the level stare and lip-curling sneer of the cynic. These are stock ingredients in that favourite pose of adolescence—" clever little me." There is always, of course, an element of bad taste about this sort of thing, but then there is often an element of bad taste about Kipling. For that matter, there is often an element of bad taste about life.

And after all, many of the horrors are at base a boy's horrors—which is perhaps one reason why, to the fully adult mind, the purely horror stories must always fall short of their intended effect. There is too much " *Now* I'll make your flesh creep "—which is, of course, the very way not to; there is too much effort to catalogue those details of the unmentionable which are best left to the imagining; the whole thing is too deliberate, too self-conscious, too much—and too obviously—turnip-and-sheet. It is not therefore surprising to see that as Kipling's career as a writer proceeds and broadens, the horrors and the brutalities drop out; this happens not, as the psychological theorists would have it, because he became safe and comfortable so that the fear-repression complex perished and with it the need for compensation; but simply because—not by any means rapidly but still in the end—Kipling grew up.

Before we turn from those criticisms of Kipling which were levelled primarily at his personal make-up, we may consider one more—rather a strange one; the allegation that he was always out-of-date. It is of interest because while it was made by Le Gallienne in 1900 it was repeated in 1936 by no less a person than George Bernard Shaw. It was, therefore, in the view of at least one first-magnitude intellect, a quality which had persisted throughout Kipling's career. Le Gallienne complained that he found nothing " modern " in Kipling; he

could discover nothing but a "cynical or good-humoured contempt for typically modern movements"; he cited democracy, the woman-movement, education for the masses. He might with advantage have considered the age of his subject at the time, but that was a reflection to which the critics of the 'nineties were not prone; "few men of intelligence," wrote Newman solemnly, "could have seen so much of life as Mr. Kipling and yet learned so little wisdom": Kipling being then twenty-eight! "For progressive thought," concluded Le Gallienne despondently, "there has been no such dangerous influence in England for many years." Bernard Shaw, in that grudging obituary we have already quoted, went further. Kipling, he said, "never grew up. He began by being behind the times." Contrast, said Shaw, H. G. Wells. How much truth is there in these charges?

A good deal. There was about Kipling a disconcerting Pannishness; he remained boyish as long as fate would let him and he kept harking back to juvenility all through his life. The more he aped the man, the more he was boy. His idea of fun never, as Gerald Gould said, outgrew the fourth-form mentality; nor was this childishness by any means confined to his fun. Much of his "brutality" and his "frightfulness" is no more than the little boy lurking in a dark corner, ready to jump out and give grandpa *such* a start; much of his passion for technicalities is the little boy's admiration for the engine-driver. Orde and Tallantire are seated on the pedestal to which the child elevates the grown-up. So often, too, his heroes, like the little boy himself, must play *all* the parts in the story; the Chief Conservator of Forests must himself put the Worcester sauce in the stew; the head of the Famine Relief must personally tell the engine-driver how and where to drive his train. There is no more boyish thing in literature than the lavish and loving appendices to "With the Night Mail." "A glittering essay in the sham-technical," Arnold Bennett called it; it was in truth more akin to a game on the nursery floor. When

Dixon Scott said, in his unusually shrewd assessment, that Kipling, like Barrie, was born innocent and never grew up, he was very near the truth.

But of course this engaging naivete, this disarming Pan-nishness, had its less admirable side. From it came his weakness for accepting ready-made the opinions of those he respected—or was told to respect—his preoccupation with mechanics, motives and consequences, actions and reactions, rather than with first causes. From it too derives that Conservative bias to which Le Gallienne and Shaw objected. This was yet another fruit ripened in the tropic sunshine of Lahore; for—with due respect to the celebrated dictum of the Jesuits—the first years in which a young man is thrown on his own feet, to act according to his own resources, are the years in which his judgment will be formed. Now during those years Rudyard Kipling was in very close touch with a powerful and formative influence—that of John Lockwood. Kipling has repeatedly assured us—and there is certainly no reason to doubt it—that he revered his father, and he must have taken over from him in bulk a great many, perhaps most, of his fixed ideas. More than the decoy crows in "Morrowbie Jukes" and the elephant dancing-grounds of Little Toomai came from the author of *Beast and Man in India*. An excellent thing is filial respect, but if all men restricted themselves to the wisdom of their sires the world would make little progress; and it does indeed seem that between his twentieth and his fiftieth birthdays Kipling's mind did make little progress. Certainly he was no reformer; except in the matter of National Service (and how much of *that* was merely Roberts and the old hero-worship from Simla?) he seems to have thought everything very well as it was; in a world which was spinning towards monstrous alterations he remained steadfastly traditional. He looked backwards rather than forwards and always with the underlying inference that the old times and the old ways were better than the new.

Keeping before us the notion that India was in some degree responsible for all this, it is interesting to recapitulate the list of subjects on which Le Gallienne—working mainly on the Indian stories—found him merely cynical and contemptuous. These were democracy, the woman-movement, the education of the masses. Now in India there is really no such thing as democracy nor even the idea of such a thing; it is a trade term which political propagandists—some of whom should have known better—have been bandying about for a century not always with understanding and rarely as a practically realizable aim. If it meant anything to Kipling it meant probably the artificial aggrandizement of those Unreal Indians who were to be numbered most emphatically among the Lesser Breeds. As regards the woman-movement, it must have struck Kipling—recollecting Amir Nath's Gully and Bisesa with her hands cut off—that the women of the West had little over which to repine; he was unsympathetic to political women and was almost as deeply shocked by their forwardness as might have been Suchet Singh or Gaur Chand in the Gully. As regards the education of the masses, the Punjab Club was still at the stage when it questioned—so far as India was concerned—the advisability of educating the masses at all. India being India and Kipling largely under the influence of the preceding generation, his sojourn there must have led him to view all "progressive movements" with a jaundiced rather than with a crusading eye. No wonder Le Gallienne thought him—though with groundless apprehension—"a retarding influence on the great world movement."

If Bikaneer House and the Punjab Club consolidated Kipling's Toryism, Sussex and Bateman's crowned it. He found there another arrangement, equally hallowed by time, a framework within which the Law could function with perfect propriety, where the Right People, invested with suitable authority, were set in their appropriate places; in support were indispensable but subservient Hobdens, rich in the

accumulated lore of generations, who stood by them respectfully much as Mulvaney stood by the little officer boy in the matter of the Big Drunk Draft. It was a pleasant picture and Kipling never seems to have realized how small a section of his world it really represented. For his curiosity, though eager, had well-defined limits; his interests, though catholic, varied greatly in intensity. Except for the case of Badalia Herodsfoot, he seems to have made no exploration into the life of the poor; industrial areas he regarded merely as an unfortunate blot on the countryside; most politics were knavery and Liberal views were symptomatic of the Lesser Breeds. As in India he had closed his eyes to the seethe of discontent and revolution, so at Bateman's he naively pinned his faith to a system valid for Bateman's but for very little else of the twentieth-century world. Again do not let us make too much of this; but if Kipling is denied greatness, one count in the verdict against him must be this refusal to move mentally with the times, this Pannishness, this determination to go through life with his father's mind.

If we pass now from criticisms of the man himself to those more directly based on his manner of writing, we must start with a blemish to which we have already been obliged to refer more than once. It may best be described by the derogatory word " knowingness." On this there is very little more that can profitably be said. The fault is there, it stands out with unpleasing emphasis, it has struck every reader of Kipling, it is unavoidable. Every one of us has writhed at one time or another over his "Always remember that . . ." " When a man knows " (" as *I* know " being understood), " There are exactly sixteen times when . . ." There is no denying that they are infernally annoying, these mannerisms; and to dismiss them as mannerisms takes us no further for style is an agglomeration of mannerisms; nor can they be fobbed off as journalese for Kipling was not writing as a journalist. One can but remind oneself that the works most frequently thus disfigured are his earliest works, that cocki-

ness is a young man's foible and that Kipling, for purposes of this particular criticism, was certainly under thirty, and often under twenty-five. Even Gosse, disconcerted as he was by the "noisy newspaper bustle of the little peremptory sentences" like "the rattle of the piano at some cafe concert" was sufficiently just to attribute these to the turmoil of a young and developing mind. It was also a mind curiously attracted by miscellaneous information, curiously anxious to be "in the know"; such a mind is exhibitionist by nature, it lives by showing off, and it is always tempted not only to assume unproven knowledge but also, when the facts fail or time lacks for investigation, to resort to downright invention. That is what Kipling did in his early stories. Young Kuppeleen Sahib was what the Americans call "fresh"; the image of Harvey Cheyne straddling in the liner's smoke-room passes again before us. It was in these deplorable moods of "knowingness" that Kipling earned Oscar Wilde's gibe that he had seen "a number of curious things through keyholes"—a sneer which would otherwise be completely inept, for no man ever saw through a keyhole with the breadth and clarity of Kipling's vision. Yet as things are, the taunt is not wholly undeserved; for there are moments in his early stories when he approaches us with the bumptious smirk of a Newmarket tipster or the gloating invitation of a Port Said tout.

This "knowingness," the pose of superior wisdom—about nothing—was a mannerism, a nervous exhibitionism, which passed away; there appeared in its place something that did not pass away—the assumption of recondite knowledge. This sort of bluff pervades story after story and consists largely in the assemblage of sufficient technicalities to stun the reader into belief. The culmination of the "sham-technical," as Bennett called it, is to be found (as one might expect from the title of the book) in *The Day's Work*. In the course of seven stories seven different branches—some of them widely different—of technical knowledge are handled, each with the

apparent certainty of an expert. Bridge engineering ("The Bridge-Builders"), marine engineering ("The Ship that Found Herself" and "The Devil and the Deep Sea"), marine engineering *plus* salvage ("Bread Upon the Waters"), Indian famine conditions ("William the Conqueror"), American horse ("The Walking Delegate"), American railroads (".007") and polo ("The Maltese Cat"). It is quite incredible that any one man could be equally at home in the minutiae of all these subjects; yet that is the impression Kipling conveys—and is at pains to convey, tossing technicalities about with the nonchalance of a juggler and throwing in extra detail for the sheer love of it. In general the bluff succeeds; the reader is bewildered by the profusion of technical language and being—like most readers—disinclined to the effort of verification, accepts and is carried along. It is of course impossible for any single mind to dissect and verify the whole of this *tour de force;* but those who are acquainted with any one of these subjects and find that subject bristling with inaccuracies or even absurdities, may fairly question the authenticity of the others. Of course it is always possible to answer—as the innumerable admirers of Kipling in this vein of technical spoof *would* answer—"Who cares? We know neither Kipling nor anyone else ever possessed all this specialized knowledge; what matter if the story itself be a good one?" But this will not suffice in the case of an author who has made such a parade of his technical knowledge or in the case of stories where technicalities form so large a part of the whole. A bluff recognized as a bluff may still succeed but there are estimations in which its author will be lowered by the exposure.

Kipling was lured into the "sham-technical" partly by his passion for seeming "in the know" and partly by his love of recondite and high-sounding words; but a third factor, and a potent one, was his genuine and missionary zeal to instruct. Second only to a good instructor he approved a good disciple; his stories are full of them, always imbibing

instruction with exemplary docility; Dan and Una, for example, in the Puck stories. Edmund Wilson has shrewdly observed that the sub-title "For Scouts and Scoutmasters" would suit many stories besides those to which it is specifically attached; a super-Scoutmaster sits in perpetual camp-fire with an audience of super-Scouts. Kipling himself possessed an insatiable curiosity and a bottomless fund of reverence; he could have lived happily either as Kim or as Kim's Lama; to be a pupil was next-best to being a preceptor and only the illusion of the Lesser Breeds could suppose it otherwise. Ready—nay, eager—to collect all manner of miscellaneous information himself, he looked for the same readiness in his hearers and readers.

"Knowingness" and its sequel, spoof omniscience, were boyish faults and—as we should expect—they die out in Kipling's later work. Their place is taken by a new blemish—obscurity; more and more, as *The Times* obituary put it, he "reserved himself from the reader" and "indulged in private jokes with his own Muse." The reason for this is not easy to determine. On purely chronological grounds one would be tempted to regard it as yet another repercussion from the American disaster: the stories written in America were still robust and straightforward; and though the work which immediately followed the tragedy of 1899—the South African War writings in general—still retains these characteristics, it must be remembered that any innovation was with Kipling a deliberate and meticulous process. The South African stories may have been merely a sort of reflex action after the stunning American blow, a superficial normality while the depths of his being readjusted themselves. Adjustment in any case quite certainly took place; for in the year 1905—six years after Josephine's death and the final flight from America—a change became evident. In that year appeared the story called "They."

"They's" reception was mixed. Some honestly admitted their inability to understand what it was all about. Some—

among them the most faithful of Kipling's " public "—were merely dismayed by the new departure. Others hailed it as his finest and most remarkable work. It is with the first of these classes that we are concerned at the moment, for "They" was the first of Kipling's obscure stories (unless one excepts " The Children of the Zodiac," to which few had given serious consideration). Except perhaps at the very end, " They " is not really an inordinately obscure story—compared with, say, " The Dog Hervey " it is crystal clear; but neither can it be called robust or straightforward. It is at any rate as much a milestone in Kipling's career as the first publication of *Plain Tales*. Whether it succeeded or failed, there can be no disputing that its aim was something new, something above any target which Kipling had yet set himself; and the point of immediate interest would seem to be that the new aim and the new blemish arrived together, and he was never able to disentangle the one from the other.

Beyond repeating what has just been said—that Kipling had set himself a fresh standard and a fresh ideal—it is difficult to give any satisfactory reason for this. Groping after the stars, he seemed fated to lose himself among the clouds. Technically the new fault derived from an experiment in inverse (it is more than indirect) narration; " They " and " Mrs. Bathurst " are early examples of this and it reaches a pitch in the appallingly convoluted " Sea Constables " and " The Dog Hervey." But to identify this as the root cause of the obscurity is not to explain why Kipling so often found the obscurity itself unavoidable or these inversions so irresistibly attractive. One can only say that he did find them so; whatever his new target may have been—and whatever it was, it was ambitious—he seemed incapable of approaching it except through smoke-screens, through the " elliptical and complex technique " as Edmund Wilson calls it, which is the least satisfactory feature of his later work. Sometimes it is a matter of complexity of thought—as, for example, in " Unprofessional " or " Fairy

Kist"; sometimes of a structural tangle as in "Dayspring Mishandled." On the other hand it is not universal; the best of the later stories are free of it—such stories as "My Son's Wife," "The Eye of Allah," "A Madonna of the Trenches" —where the new target, the new and almost inaccessible target, is at last seen clear of the smoke-screens and is precisely struck.

The final phrase of the critical assault upon Kipling is concerned less with manner than with matter and there are three aspects of his work which have come regularly under fire—his soldiers, his women and his humour. We should perhaps have taken the first of these when we were discussing the accusation of Le Gallienne and Shaw that Kipling lived in an out-of-date world, for the charge of being anachronisms has more than once been brought against his soldiers. It is a point on which, writing in the nineteen-forties, it is difficult to give judgment. Gosse—who was nearer in time but who probably did not know a very great deal about the contemporary Army in India—was captivated, as was Stevenson, by Mulvaney; and though he was distressed by their pervading flavour of melancholy, he reckoned Kipling's private soldiers among the best of his achievements. Others however have insisted that Kipling was grossly unfair to the soldiers of his day, who were a much better-educated, better-spoken company than he allowed them to be either in his stories or his verse; they explain this by supposing that he drew from antique models. It is believed that he gathered much of his material from Quartermaster-Sergeant Bancroft who was living in retirement at Solon in the 'eighties; now Bancroft belonged to the old Bengal Horse Artillery which was a part of John Company's Army; his version of life in the Indian Army may have gone back to the Mutiny and in any case could not well have been more up-to-date than the Second Afghan War. If Kipling drew from Bancroft, he drew men already dead and passed away. Sir Francis Younghusband would go further still; there

never were such soldiers; Kipling created them. "I had never heard the words or expressions Kipling's soldiers used. . . . but, surely enough, a few years afterwards the soldiers thought and talked exactly as Kipling had taught them in his stories. Rudyard Kipling made the modern soldier.". . . On the other hand another military writer speaks of the "literally photographic" accuracy of *Barrack-room Ballads*. What is one to make of these contradictions?

Where contemporary authority so violently disagrees, it is impossible now to be certain. Yet one would feel inclined to give the benefit of the doubt to Kipling. Had Quartermaster-Sergeant Bancroft been the only soldier with whom he ever came in contact there might be something in the theory that the Soldiers Three were coloured with the tints of a bygone age. But Kipling lived amongst the soldiers of his day; he had constant opportunity of observing them, and wherever he failed, it was never in the field of direct observation. The actual incidents in the soldier stories may have come from a previous decade but the characters and the trappings were contemporary. In any case his soldiers themselves proclaim their authenticity; they stand upon their own feet and say so; Mulvaney, Ortheris, Learoyd, Tim Vulmea, Losson, Simmons, Shadd, the whole living and breathing battalion of them, announce themselves as taken from the life. And if it comes to language, there were many soldiers not only of the 'eighties and 'nineties and the Boer War but of the Great War too who spoke the tongue of *Barrack-room Ballads*: there are soldiers who speak it today. Indeed, Kipling's soldiers live just for this very reason—that there is about them a quality of permanence, a fragment of the eternal verities. Ortheris, in the 'eighties sitting in the sun-bitten plains outside Lahore and pining for a little taxidermist's shop in the Fulham Road; surely that same man sat and nursed these same yearnings in 1916 in the Besch Chinar Gardens at Salonika and in 1941 on the Escarpment at Sollum?

So much for Kipling's soldiers; about his women contro-

versy has been at once more bitter and more profound. It has been given to very few writers to portray men and women with equal success and to say that Kipling's men are better than his women does not take us very far, and may not, even as a working generality, be true. It is more interesting, for our present purpose, to inquire in what respects, if any, his women fail and why. At first glance the answer would seem easy. Here is a man whose activities are essentially male; who delights in wandering—nay, rushing—from continent to continent; who can identify himself with private soldiers, with ships' engineers, with loafers and petty officers and fishermen; who takes up his mind with piston-rods and cylinders and apparatus of all sorts. How should such a man have any understanding of women? But this will not serve because it is only half of the picture. Kipling was interested in all these essentially masculine pursuits but he had besides many qualities which were as essentially feminine. He was full of feminine intuition and insight; he understood—and practised in his stories—all sorts of little feminine cruelties; he had the feminine gift of flashing from side to side of contradictories; he had even—though more pronouncedly in his later years—the old-maidishness that surrounds itself with indispensable trifles and must needs do things in a certain order and in a certain way. With so much of the feminine in his character it would be indeed strange if his women were drawn without understanding or if they were untrue to life. And the fact is that neither of these things is the case. When Kipling's women are decried as unreal, they are being libelled.

Indeed Kipling's female readers seem to have appreciated this point better than the male; as his French critics—who should be sound judges on a point of this sort—have seen it more clearly than the English. That useful organ of the social conscience, *T. P.'s Weekly*, on one occasion opened its columns to a symposium on the question whether women liked Kipling or not. On balance the verdict of the lady readers was in his favour; many of the contributors were vague as to their

reasons but tended to agree that he was "virile" and that virility was a quality which woman must admire. This was an interesting piece of optimism, but more to our present point is the contribution of a lady who signed herself "M.J.S." and who gave it as her opinion that Kipling understood women as few male writers had ever done. She cited, as evidence of his grasp of feminine detail, the farewells between Maisie and the red-haired girl on the day when Torpenhow came to Vitry-sur-Marne and "so between tears, kisses, methole and packing. . . the sultry afternoon wore away." What other man, asked M.J.S. triumphantly, would have ventured on these intimacies? In 1891, perhaps, comparatively few; but then it is never on the details that Kipling's women fall short; what they lack is rather the fusion of these details into an independent whole inspired by a live and individual spirit. This same Maisie in *The Light that Failed* is not quite credible partly because she is out of key with her time but partly too because Kipling never quite wholly saw her. In all his early women there is a quality which one can only describe as second-handness; time and again one has the feeling, "This is what he was *told* about women—by a woman." Startled, like M.J.S., by the accuracy of the detail, one seeks vainly in the assembled character the authentic ring and the authentic heat of first-hand experience. One is left thinking, "Perhaps women were one of the things he *did* see through keyholes."

Cyril Falls has remarked that to Kipling women were mysterious, untrustable and difficult to understand because they were primitive and simple. That he thought them difficult may be true enough but it is hardly likely that he thought them simple; there is not much evidence of any such sentiment in his writings, where they appear rather as highly complex and dangerous, and where he is prepared to attribute to them Barriesque mysteries and well-nigh supernatural gifts. No woman was ever quite such a power for evil as Mrs. Reiver or quite such a power for all manner of things as Mrs. Hauksbee and no man would ever have believed

that she could be; making all allowance for the streak of the feminine in Kipling and for the indulgence he allowed his imagination, one would say that he saw these two ladies through the eyes of other women. This was perhaps yet another result of life at Bikaneer House; in that frank and communal family there were few secrets, and if Ruddy were desirous of counsel, he could resort to a wise and experienced mother and to that sister whom Simla knew as the Ice Maiden—not from any lack of warmheartedness but for her cool and judicious appraisal of values both in herself and in others. These two were acquainted with everyone in Simla and they were ladies of decided opinions and candid speech. There were few veils which feminine Simla could draw between itself and the inquisitive stare of young "Kuppeleen Sahib" which either Trix or the mother could not tear away. But in the process they were apt to substitute coloured screens of their own devising and it was in the modified light of these that the object stood finally revealed. In this light—very much to his good—were displayed the young women in particular to whom Ruddy was temporarily attracted, and also—not so much to his good—womankind in general.

It has been said—egregiously—that Kipling was so charged with energy that he had no time for women. This is ridiculous; on general grounds, the most abundantly energetic are the most likely to have a time—a very special and exclusive time—for women; and on particular grounds, the contrary is perfectly evident from his writings. There is also good reason to believe that, in his teens and his twenties, women had abundant time for him. It was time wasted, however, for—the privacy complex, the owning of oneself, coming in here to reinforce the motherly and sisterly jealousies—he shied away from them. "The colt that is wise will beware of the terrible thorn-bit of marriage"; the *Maxims of Hafiz* were not written merely to be cynical and clever; they were what their author for the moment quite sincerely believed. He was convinced that the primary object of woman is to

interfere with man's life, and he had a grim suspicion—later developed in that interesting parable "The Enemies to Each Other"—that without this interference man cannot adequately live. He desired, however, that his own life should not be interfered with—or not at least till he was ready; therefore, he walked warily with women. In India he chose as his feminine friends young married women, good riders, good dancers (he fought very shy of the "Maneater," the unmarried but marriageable virgin) and it is possible that of many of these he could have said "I learned about women from *'er.*" Now young married women, however accomplished in the ballroom or on horseback, are prone, in the company of an unmarried young man, to assume airs of unspeakable wisdom and to flit nymph-like through thickets—infinitely mysterious but in the main bogus—of their own creating. They are imbued moreover on these occasions with an abnormal loyalty to their sex. The picture of woman, therefore, that Kipling's instructresses were most likely to pass on to their young companion would be that of the aloof incomprehensible, the eternal manœuvrer, the wise weaver of destinies. He took a great deal of this, in his easy-going way, at face value. It is perhaps significant that when the influence of Bikaneer House—of sister and mother—is left behind, these woman-inspired women, the Hauksbees and Reivers, fade out of his work and something more like the reality begins to take their place. Till then, however, Kipling's women are really in the same box as Orde and Tallantire; that is to say, they are what he thought they should have been because it was thus they were exhibited to him at an impressionable stage and by those whose judgment he was ready—too ready—to accept.

That is not, however, to say they are ever unreal; they are as nearly real as hearsay rather than intimacy can make them. And against another charge—that they were a bad lot—their defence is impregnable. One of the more curious

and one of the most unfair of the strictures which have been passed on Kipling's Indian stories is on the ground of their "immorality." We need not go back to Francis Adams's gibe about "duty and red tape tempered by picnics and adultery"; in Baker and Packman's recent *Guide to the Best Fiction*—a misleading guide surely if this be a typical example—the "peculiar catchy realism" of *Plain Tales* is said to "have been compared"—it is *not* said by whom—to "a searchlight constantly uncovering the dirty aspects of life"; and in the same work of reference "The Gadsbys" is described as a "morbid" episode of married life in the officers' quarters. This is rank nonsense. If it comes to manner, few writers can have written so many words of which so few could be called questionable; even his mother once criticized the baldness with which some of his characters made love, and his reply was that he disapproved of "wenching in print." So he quite obviously did; and if it comes to matter, surely no more effective series of tracts was ever penned. The original edition of *Under the Deodars* has a preface; the book, it says, "deals with things that are not pretty and with ugliness that hurts. But . . . the stories ought to explain that there is no particular profit in going wrong at any time, under any circumstances or for any consideration." They do "explain" it; one single situation occurs again and again—the pitiable predicament of those who have thrown away substance for shadow, who have entered into an illicit attachment, who are heartily sick of it and who cannot free themselves from its toils. Every woman, it has been said, justifies the first unfaithfulness by telling herself "*This* time it is for ever"; the horror of the realization that it is after all *not* for ever or even for very long—that the victim is now committed to a course in which this first indiscretion may well be but an item in an increasingly depressing and disillusioning series—this is brought home in these stories time and again. Against this merciless instruction no charge of immorality can stand;

indeed one is inclined to take sides with the cynic who suggested that it was brought only by women in England embittered and disappointed because their sisters in Simla were apparently enjoying such splendid fun.

But of course even the early Kipling, wary of women and reciting to himself the *Maxims of Hafiz,* was not always the cynic; and like all cynics, when he fell into sentiment, he fell heavily. As witness "The Brushwood Boy" which, as a straightforward love story, must be among the most affecting and the most charming ever written. Can any of us read it without that pang which must, one feels, have rent the author as he wrote it—"Oh that this could really happen; oh that the world of men and maidens were indeed like this!" Kipling was always a little afraid of women; he was tormented by the conviction that they *could* contribute to life something beautifully Brushwood-Boyish which would solve all riddles and would be almost too delightful to be endured; and at the same time he was deterred by the observed phenomenon that they did in fact contribute Tertium Quids, Phantom Rickshaws and little hells-on-earth like that Kashima on the Narkarra Road where the idiotic Major Vansuythen thought "we must all be friendly." Woman could be Mrs. Hauksbee, Lalun or the The Dowd—good and well; but then—but then—she could also be Maisie or Annie*an*-Louise; and Kipling was never quite sure in which guise he feared her most.

But perhaps the key to his attitude towards woman is to be found in a phrase of that same Brushwood Boy who "did not care to have his tennis spoiled by petticoats in the court." The Brushwood Boy, like Kipling, had his dreams; but he also—like Kipling—took his tennis seriously. Kipling believed with him that women had a very definite place in the scheme of things and that some effort was necessary to keep them there; not all of them could be depended upon to exercise of their own volition the laudable self-abnegation of William the Conqueror. Such a theory,

of course, was in comfortable accord with the tenets of the 'nineties; but one is tempted to play with the idea that here is yet another of the effects of India. In India the place of women—of English women *bien entendu*—is far more clearly defined than it can ever be at home if only because there are so many fewer possible alternatives. The memsahib has no career, she cannot go into politics whether local or national, she can do very little in the way of 'good works' in a country where the 'good-worker' is hedged around by so many obstacles of caste, creed and climate. Therefore she sits at home most of the day and in the evenings she comes to the club. Now Kipling's attitude to women is almost exactly that of the ordinary Indian station club. Granted the desirability of a club for society's sake and the desirability of ladies for a variety of reasons, then the club must be furnished with a ladies' annexe *because,* if the world is to continue in peace and comfort, there must be parts of the club into which the ladies are not admitted. As Pip Gadsby only too clearly demonstrated to his Minnie, they must not intrude into the office by day where men discuss their life's work; nor should they intrude by night into the club bar where men discuss their life's interests. As in the club, thought Kipling, so in life. Let women be members of the annexe, let them conform to the regulations of the club, and there is nothing he will not do for them. This is no doubt a fanciful presentation of the case, but it is not wholly fanciful. To Kipling women were always secondary—apart, that is, from the lovely and unrealizable dreams of Brushwood Boys; they must not interfere with a man's work. They must remain until, finished with his day's work, finished with his evening's fun, he came to seek them—in the annexe.

If this be so, it is ironically amusing to see how in one of Kipling's few full-length portraits, the woman turns the tables, asserting to the hero's discomfiture that *she* has her work with which the male has no right or business to inter-

fere. Maisie in *The Light that Failed* was an unpopular heroine largely because her creator was—for once—years *ahead* of his time. She reads much better in 1945 than she did in 1891 for the simple reason that her views which seemed in those days hard and unreasonable and unwomanly would now arouse no serious criticism. But they were also the precise counterpart of those which, according to Kipling, any young man should have held. One wonders—did he see it?

Whatever her views may have been, Maisie was a live woman; and she is by no means the only live woman in Kipling's gallery. In fact—with the possible exception of *Captains Courageous* where the American women come out strangely flat and uninteresting—they can be picked from every other story. (It is curious by the way that his American women are his worst; Kate in *The Naulahka* is the most tiresome goody-goody. Yet he married an American; did he see there something he could never convey to paper or was it something essentially "private" which he deliberately avoided conveying?) Mrs. Herriott in "The Gadsbys"; Badalia Herodsfoot; Holden's Ameera; Philadelphia Bucksteed dying of consumption; Rhoda Dolbie; the uncomfortable Miss Sichliffe; Mary Postgate; here are some random examples diversified enough yet sharing the common quality of vivid and convincing life. They live; and yet all of them—and all the rest of his women—are, in a sense, background women, waiting in the annexe. Out of the annexe he takes them and into the annexe he puts them back. Or are they—and is this perhaps the secret?—creations he made because he sought refuge in the invented from the real; and was it the revenge of the real women that these dream creatures stood for ever between him and full experience? And for that very reason failed to come wholly to life? A vicious circle indeed!

Some few pages back it was said that there was always in Kipling an element of bad taste; if that were so it should

emerge very clearly in the next aspect under which we are to consider him—his humour. It is to be feared that it does emerge very clearly. Opinion on this subject has been sharply divided ever since the day when Le Gallienne—somewhat unexpectedly—hailed him as the "one real humorist vouchsafed to England for some years." Since then—and indeed before it—Kipling's readers have either been delighted by his humour or disgusted; there does not seem to be any middle course. This is not perhaps in itself surprising. In the rest of Kipling's work there is a great diversity wherein all gradations of taste may find something to satisfy them; his humour is almost all on a single note, and that one note is loud, blatant and percussive. That he could write a funny story free from extravagance or slapstick is shown by "The Taking of Lungtungpen," "My Lord the Elephant," or "Little Foxes": but unfortunately he took his real delight in noisier and broader buffoonery. For his recipe does not alter. The trappings vary, the decor is sometimes immensely elaborate and sometimes crudely simple; but once the stage is set, his clowns stamp and caper, slap, bawl and somersault in the same elementary pantomime.

Cyril Falls speaks of "that roaring mirth which is peculiarly a mark of the Anglo-Saxon race"; there may be Anglo-Saxons who would receive this award some coldly, but Kipling would not have been one of them. At Westward Ho! he had a reputation not only for satire but as a broad comedian and we have already seen that picture of him in the *C.M.G.* office shaking from head to foot with laughter and wiping his spectacles while the sweat ran down his forehead. In his own stories the narrator is frequently choking and crowing and holding his sides—if he is not indeed reduced to rolling on the ground. Kipling's idea of a joke was robust fun for robust folk and those with a taste for the more delicate shades of drollery would be well advised to avoid his deliberately humorous stories.

They are not perhaps for adults. Humour was the one sphere of Kipling's work in which his Pannishness persisted to the end, in which he *never* grew up; "Aunt Ellen" is as fourth-form as the two or three *Plain Tales* of which it is in some sort a variant. There is nothing that can profitably be written on this subject; it is fundamentally a question of taste and therefore outside the field of argument. Those who are not amused can only regard with envy their more full-blooded brothers, whose fortitude equips them to appreciate this side of their author's work; or sigh for those "frontless days before the beard" when *Comic Cuts* and the custard-pie school of humour could still divert. It rarely perhaps becomes worse than this—that the adult should stand smiling vaguely and a little painfully while the schoolboy revels in his pranks; there is, in all the "funny" stories, perhaps only one absolute and shocking howler—"The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney"—where the breach of taste becomes absolutely unendurable; and even here an ignorance of India palliates the abominations. For the rest it is mostly a question of juvenile clownery and glee; persons are pursued by swarms of infuriated bees; other persons become involved in some form of tar-and-feathering; a country constable is left as night is falling far from home and surrounded by kangaroos; the vengeful narrator invents an excruciatingly comic dance; a ship's engineer is made drunk; a navvy is made sick. Not perhaps what his admirers would have hoped for from Kipling but still—on the whole—fourth-form and no worse.

Before we leave Kipling's humour, it is perhaps worth while to consider how it dovetails in with other traits in his character which we have already noticed. The Pannishness, of course; but it also affords rich opportunity—too often availed of—for "spade-painting." Kipling was always apt to include a spade in his paint-box but never so disastrously as when he set out to amuse. It links up too with the "brutality," that complete lack of mercy or pity which

marred his earlier work. In most of the humorous stories the narrator is left wallowing in mirth over some unfortunate who has been cast into circumstances of acute discomfort and ridicule; the victim may have deserved it or he may not, but even if he has, the spectacle is not necessarily amusing. Only the completely unmerciful can really enjoy the sight of such discomfiture; only a hard mind could have taken pleasure in devising and describing it; perhaps only a mind with an inherent strain of "brutality" could have described and devised it all with such loving elaboration and care. In fact, if one were set to justify the accusation of brutality in Kipling's work one could draw far more profitably on the funny stories than on the horrible. We all shudder at skeletons but we laugh according to our individual tastes: our butts, not our bogies, reveal us.

The fact is that in Kipling's general make-up there was little room for the finer qualities of humour—to say nothing of wit. He was too self-centred for the necessary detachment, too self-satisfied for the necessary give-and-take, too hidebound for appreciation of that incongruity on which all the finer shades depend. Beyond the practical joke he could not—or did not much care to—go. He was obliged therefore to fall back on this roaring boisterousness which led at best to farce and at worst to slapstick. And, fortunately or unfortunately, he was far too good an artist to succeed on this street-pavement level. A rougher hand, a coarser touch, a poorer genius, will not only suffice but is actually demanded. To turn Kipling's gifts to the production of such humours as "Brugglesmith" or "My Sunday at Home" is equivalent to setting a *Punch* draughtsman of the old fine-line school to the production of an evening paper cartoon or an American comic strip. It is possible that occasional amusing objects may emerge but the work will have been wasted. Its results can never even be first-class in their own *genre* and the artist might, all the time,

have been employed to so much better advantage upon something else.

There is another aspect of Kipling's work where his limits seem to have been reached as easily but with far more damaging results to his reputation. This was his politics. Few of his activities more bitterly and lastingly excited his critics; and perhaps this was deservedly so—though not for the reason those critics would have given. For in fact Kipling's politics can hardly be said to have amounted to an activity at all. We have already noted his readiness to accept as principles mere statements whose validity he was too lazy to examine, and when these related to politics, he was readier than ever. We have seen him in India accepting the comfortable doctrine of Orde and Tallantire and the Real Indians and deliberately—or so negligently as to come to the same thing—blinding himself to the surge and seethe of coming revolution all round him. We have seen him accepting the localized microcosm of Bateman's as a working model of the world. He deserved in fact to be attacked for his politics not because of anything in the politics themselves but because they were not *his* politics at all. They were something that he took ready-made and without examination. To a completely incurious mind this acceptance might be forgiven; but in a mind dowered with an acute inquisitiveness, impelled by so powerful—and often so fruitful—a desire to "find out," it is less pardonable. If Kipling had applied to contemporary politics the interest that he devoted—or professed to devote—to the dancers of the Halli-Huk, he must almost of necessity have altered many of his views; and it is for this failure to apply his curiosity that he stands blameworthy now. For Kipling sought to have things both ways. He desired to take his stand as a prophet, he was ready to castigate the apathetic people of these islands, he propounded—rather hazily and lazily—the immense concept of the Law with all its implications; but at the same time he was not sufficiently in-

terested to think out the underlying principles for himself. As ever, he built not on axioms but on hypotheses, not on convictions but on hearsay. And if he paid for it—partly in misunderstanding, partly in genuine exposure—who shall say that his fate was undeserved?

Kipling's natural tendency, in politics as in life, was conservative—almost reactionary. Perhaps the first major change in his young life—from the pleasaunces of Bombay to the horrors of Southsea—was so manifestly for the worse that it convinced him for all time that change could never be otherwise. Perhaps the conservative idea fitted in with a generally nostalgic nature. Nothing in any case would rid him of the shibboleths to which he had once subscribed. We have seen him clinging so tenaciously to the traditions of his caste in India that when he came to London he could deny almost the existence of the Indian National Congress. In South Africa he was anti-Boer and he remained besottedly anti-Boer long after it became evident that such an attitude was hopeless and profitless. He disapproved violently and specifically of any reforms whether Indian or African; in *Something of Myself* he can speak of " each new piece of broadminded folly in India, Egypt or Ceylon." The truth seems to be that he was fundamentally uninterested in political questions; but he felt it incumbent on him to strike an attitude, and in this, once assumed, he pertrified. The result was that between his first-class intellect and his second-hand political opinions there was a constant and unresolved conflict which, if it was never obvious to himself, was always fatally obvious to his enemies.

To this extent then Kipling's political ideas can fairly be condemned—that they were in the first place not his own ideas and that in the second they were quite inexcusably rigid. But these are not the grounds on which he has been in fact most bitterly attacked. The main attack sprang generally from a misconception of his " Law "; for this again he was largely to blame, for he was never at pains to

expound clearly the Law's precise meaning and intention; he expressed it in parables and allegories so that the student was obliged to make the most of what light he could see shining through the painted screen. And the light he saw was not invariably the light Kipling meant him to see. Viewed through this somewhat distorting medium, the Law appeared from one angle as " Jingoism " and from another as " Imperialism." If he had lived long enough it would no doubt have been called " Fascism "—or worse. Superficially there is a good deal in common between Kipling and the Fascists; a nation with a mission to take charge of, instruct and direct the world; a " white man's burden "; the " strong man ruling alone "; many of these phrases seem to echo in the very pages of *Mein Kampf*. Yet the Law involved no violence, no forcible conversions. It depended for its success on general agreement as to its merits—and Kipling was naive enough to suppose that such an agreement would be generally forthcoming and that the Have-nots would be perpetually content to acquiesce in their deficiency. It was in turn incumbent on the exponents of the Law, they in whose hands the light and the glory had been placed, so to conduct themselves—within their own councils and among the Lesser Breeds—as to make this universal recognition merely a question of time and proximity. Meanwhile, in their own interests, the Lesser Breeds must be restrained from folly and coerced into industry. In such doctrines neither the Jingo nor the Imperialist is very apparent and Kipling would no doubt have been less violently abused if he had condescended to make his position a little less equivocal. But here there intruded another contradiction—this time dictated by the privacy complex. " Never explain " is a maximum in *Something of Myself* with which his readers were already well acquainted; any form of explanation, even self-explanation at one's own instance, is a violation of privacy. Kipling—it is not a course for which we can commend him—preferred to leave the Law nebulous

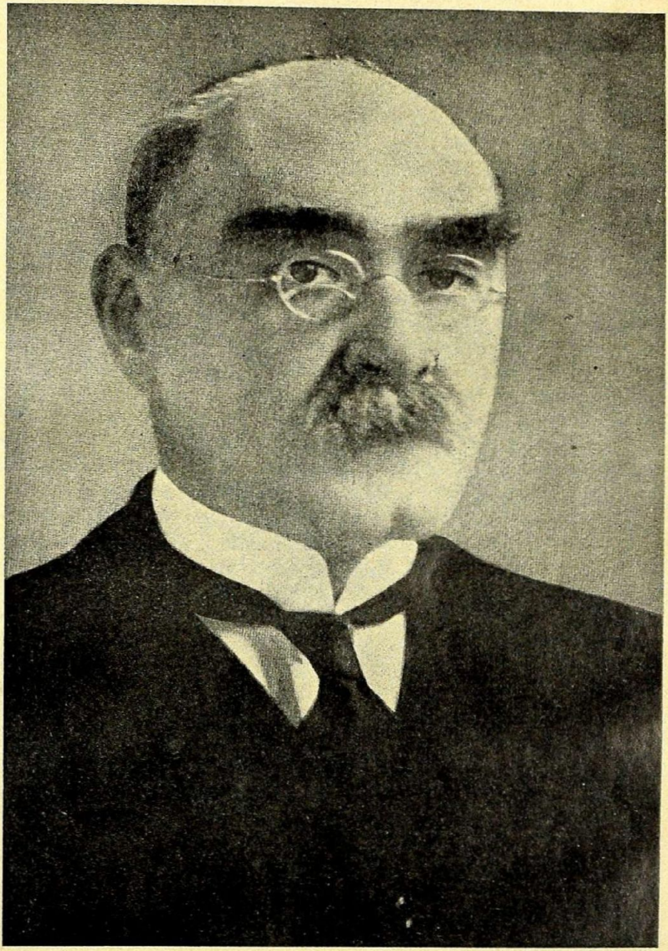
and his privacy intact.

The privacy complex was not alone in working towards an uncommunicative silence. India had engendered in Kipling not a little of the mystic and it is no part of the mystic's profession to put things down in black and white; he is never anxious to explain his thoughts to others because he is never anxious to explain his thoughts to himself. If all could be made lucid, aboveboard, straightforward and explict, something precious would have gone out of it, he feels, which could hardly be restored. It is difficult to say whether Kipling was lazy-minded because he was a mystic or whether he was a mystic because he was lazy-minded, and perhaps the right order of these alternatives is immaterial. The essential is to recognize that he had in him this quality, which intensified rather than otherwise with the passage of time. Some pages back, we were endeavouring to exhibit the causes of the obscurity which crept into Kipling's later work and we were unable to say anything more than that it seemed to be an inevitable concomitant of his attack on new and higher targets. We must not forget in that connection also this element of mysticism and the delight of mystics in obscurity for its own sake. During his stay in India Kipling was strongly (if superficially) impressed by Oriental writings and Oriental modes of thought; and after the batterings of the American tragedy the role of *Sanyasi* must have held for him obvious attractions. It was not surprising that, adopting this role, he should speak in character.

We have now examined the critical attack upon Kipling from various points of view. There remains perhaps one accusation which has been dealt with so far implicitly rather than explicitly—his occasional serious lapses, lapses from his own standards of art, lapses from any accepted standard of taste. The only answer to this is to say that these occasional blind spots are apparently in themselves a symptom of greatness; no writer is so full of them as Shakespeare.

On the other hand it is not to be denied that Kipling has written lines of verse—and indeed whole stories—which have repelled his most partisan admirers as violently as the blank verse of "Evarra" revolted Francis Adams; nor that, amid all the differences of opinion over Kipling's work, there are some few of these items on which there will be almost universal agreement. Francis Adams, shaking his head more in sorrow than in anger, wrote that "the drop in Mr. Kipling is always straight from the stars into the puddles." He was obliged to qualify this sweeping statement—as one is always obliged to qualify any sweeping statement about Kipling—almost in the next line, and it is, of course, not strictly true; there are gradations; but it *is* substantially true to say that the fall from his best to his worst can be both swift and sudden, and it is not unfair to say that he himself does not always seem to be aware of the descent. It can only be repeated that this is a quality common to great writers—and perhaps one may add, "Who cares?" In the radiance of Kipling's stars we will splash resignedly through the miriest of his puddles; and there is, when all is said and done, so much less mud than starlight.

As a pendant to this chapter in which we have surveyed the critical attack made on Kipling by his own countrymen it may be worth while to glance at the view of him put forward by competent observers of other nations. If there "came a season" when the critics at home looked at Kipling and saw him not, his repute on the Continent stood consistently high; on the Continent they took him seriously. Few English writers have been made the hero of a French novel—or at least of a French novel crowned by the Goncourt Academy: yet as "Dingley, l'Illustre Ecrivain" in the story by the brothers Tharaud this was Kipling's distinction. The portrait was not wholly flattering for "Dingley" was an anti-Boer Imperialist who was duly chastised by the loss of his only son: read "German" for "Boer" and there is unwitting prophecy here. But the Continent went



A French Portrait of Kipling

This cannot be called a flattering portrait, but it has caught very faithfully his characteristic features—the immense eyebrows "either of which would have served any ordinary man for a moustache," and the formidable cleft chin

much further than Dingleys. The most remarkable evidence of its respect was the award by the Swedish Academy in 1907 of the Nobel Prize for Literature—an award which annoyed and distressed a number of Kipling's contemporaries. In view of the fact that Meredith, Hardy and Swinburne were still alive and that one of them, at least, was active, the choice of Kipling was perhaps a trifle startling; although the student of Kipling may regard with livelier surprise the *date* of the award—1907, midway between *Traffics and Discoveries* and *Actions and Reactions*, the dead-centre of the Middle Kipling Period. (Twenty years later our own Royal Society of Literature presented him with its Gold Medal—again in preference to several apparently competitive candidates; it was only the ninth medal of its kind to be given and five of the earlier recipients —working backwards—were Hardy, Washington Irving, Crabbe, Southey and Walter Scott. Here at least Kipling establishes a record; there is no other British author who can boast of these two decorations.)

The Continental critics, then, took Kipling seriously and on the whole they welcomed him. They approved of him for a quality which, though apparent enough when one comes to look for it, might not strike the casual observer—his intense Englishness. By this they meant, no doubt, his driving and—to them—inexplicable energy (" Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun "). Chevrillon, indeed, who did so much to establish his reputation in France, hailed him as " the Professor of Energy." " M. Kipling," he wrote, " etait Anglais d'une facon simple, violente et de plus, tres nouvelle. Cette intense, cette tyrannique, cette inevitable personalite de Kipling nous impose des le premier mot son obstinee presence." Simple and violent; one may recall perhaps the obituary in the *Popolo di Roma* with its commendation of his " simple and elementary values," or the " grand primitif " of the *Mercure de France*. Kipling wrote of the Englishman as the Continental—in his

kindlier moods—desired to see and admire him; straightforward, traditional, controlled, a driving force balanced delicately between honour and go-getting. If the picture was less acceptable to Kipling's countrymen at home, it was because they were less able to play the role of the disinterested spectator, because their mood was less kindly and perhaps because they suspected, when they thought fit to apply their minds to their reading, that the picture he drew of them was after all something of an unrealized ideal. In this contrary world it is easy to forgive the artist who caricatures us laughably or even cruelly; not so easy to forgive that other who portrays us as we wish we were.

Chevrillon in France, with his Gallic *elan* was perhaps the most enthusiastic and voluable of Kipling's Continental sponsors. The northern nations, while they did not neglect him, were—as might be expected—more specifically professorial. It was the Swedish philosopher Leeb-Lundberg who wrote the most careful and minute analysis of Kipling's methods and language that has yet been compiled; his book is a slim one but appallingly thorough and his catalogues of Neologisms, Onomatopes and Parasynthetics should put us all to shame. In the end these labours led him to a conclusion which he might have taken from Chevrillon; the secret of Kipling's popularity, he found, was that, " to an epoch of over-civilized passiveness he preached the simple " (" simple " again!) " and age-old gospel of action." We have already considered how far the 'nineties were really—in literature, that is to say—an " epoch of over-civilized passiveness "; but if the learned doctor's conclusion was unstartling in one respect and questionable in another, he spared no labour and attention in reaching it. The curious who seek further evidence of the Continent's disposition to take Kipling seriously may find the same care and devotion, focussed on a different target, in the *Beitrage zur Metrik Rudyard Kiplings* of the enlightened and painstaking Herr Loewe.

But is it not ironically significant that so much French, German and Swedish ink should have been spilt, so much Continental oil burned at midnight in the elaborate and scholarly analysis of a writer dismissed so often and so easily by his own countrymen with such expressions as " banjo," " music-hall," " journalist " and " Jingo "?

VII

TELLING THE LIE

" Say what you have to say, tell your lie in your own way and all will be well "

KIPLING to W. A. Fraser, 2nd July, 1896

IN assessing the work of most writers whose reputation is based upon any considerable volume of output, it is usually possible to trace an ascent, a peak and a falling away. A graph of their achievement would show an upward slant, broken perhaps by steps or recessions, but rising more or less continuously to an apex and from thence descending gently downwards. It is not so with Kipling whose work sprang into being at full strength and remained so—with aberrations—till the end. The graph of Kipling would show a series of minor serrations beginning at a high point on the upright and departing in general neither very much above nor very much below this level. In this sierra there would, however, occur sudden and pronounced fissures or very sharp and very deep troughs. If a number of different persons were set simultaneously to draw these graphs, the resulting figures would not differ very materially in general design and effect. There would be general agreement on the sierra; the disagreement would be found in the precise location and the precise depth of the troughs or fissures. This

is as much as to say that in Kipling's work there is a generally appreciated level of excellence but that each individual student will be mortified and annoyed to discover every here and there what he considers an acute blunder—in taste, in style or in subject. The selection of these particular failures—the fissures or troughs in the graph—will depend largely on the individual taste of the reader; and it will be on the question of whether this or that story, this or that poem, is a failure or not that controversy will most angrily rage.

The cause of this phenomenon—this relative stability, over fifty years of writing, at a high level of excellence—is not very easily determined. One is tempted to fall back on Kipling's well-known habit of turning over his work for a long time and polishing and re-polishing till in his exacting judgment it would polish no more. But this will not suffice. The Indian stories, with which he struck the high note he was always to maintain, could not, in the nature of things, have been kept and polished very long; indeed, we know, to the contrary, that many of them were thrown into print as soon as their ink was dry. One is obliged therefore to posit this as one of Kipling's qualities—perhaps his most remarkable quality—that he served no apprenticeship. He emerges on the roof; one sees no trace anywhere of the ladder.

It follows that the orthodox line of progress which can be discerned in most authors of comparable output cannot be discerned in Kipling; there is, in this sense of the word, no progress. In the early years of this century it was possible for Henry James to write, with a triumphant sense of having solved the riddle, that Kipling came "steadily from the less simple in subject to the more simple—from Anglo-Indians to natives, from natives to Tommies, from the Tommies to the quadrupeds, from the quadrupeds to the fish, and from the fish to the engines and screws." Even as applied to Kipling's work up to the time when James wrote the passage,

this estimate will not stand very close chronological scrutiny; it is entirely falsified by Kipling's subsequent divergence into subjects not more simple but more complicated. James might have enjoyed "Dayspring Mishandled" or "The Dog Hervey" but they would have obliged him to abandon his theoretical line of progress. If the needle seemed to swing for a time from complex to simple, it swung back full circle.

Indeed no sort of reckoning by subjects will get us anywhere in an estimate of Kipling's work and Kipling's career. He could tackle—and he did tackle—anything; and he not only tackled it but he mastered it. He had only to pick up some completely new theme in order to score a success with it as indisputable as those which had gone before. It became fashionable for a time, on this account, to decry Kipling as a mere virtuoso, a mere performer—to class him with that entertaining but not over-serious type of musician who can play with equal facility on a number of incongruous instruments, perhaps on several of them at once. No really great musician has ever been known to do this; no really great writer, it was argued, could indulge in so damning a versatility. Yet the fact remains that Kipling did indulge in it—and with an all-round and unflagging excellence which lifted him at once out of the category of the trick musician or the one-man band. One can but claim this as another of his amazing gifts; that he could tackle anything from a sermon to a music-hall song and could make a success of each new venture which would add to his reputation. Few authors of any age or any country could have written *both* "Recessional" and "Fuzzy-Wuzzy"; few authors could have written *both* "They" and "The Taking of Lungtungpen"—and these would have been unlikely to add "The Gadsbys" or *Captains Courageous* or *Stalky*. Immense unbounded incalculable variety—this must be acknowledged as a facet, perhaps *the* facet, of Kipling's genius. Yet the charge of virtuosity is not without its point and its lesson;

it is one of the most dangerous that can be brought against Kipling. It leads us straight back to Le Gallienne and his complaint of "insincerity"; can such an author have any convictions, any standards, any ideals? Can any author, lacking these, achieve greatness? And not everyone will be satisfied with the rejoinder that an imaginative writer has no need of such an equipment—is indeed better without it.

There *is*, of course, an advancement in Kipling's work other than the mere transition from one triumph of versatility to another; the later stories are subtly but quite noticeably "different" from the earlier. So much is obvious but it is not so easy to indicate just wherein this "difference" lies. Once Kipling promoted himself from the bare skeleton anecdote—as in *Plain Tales*—to the decorated and elaborate *chef d'œuvre,* there is not much variation in merit or in general style. The stories do not become better written or worse. The "difference" lies much more in the field of subject-matter; the later stories are more ambitious in theme, they advance into a higher stratum, they find their inspiration in the deep wells of human character rather than in the rushing torrents of human activity. There is, as there naturally would be, an enhanced maturity of outlook. Yet the very subtlety of this "difference" and the difficulty in its detection are in themselves perplexing in an author who donned costume after costume, a musician who picked up instrument after instrument. Why is there so *little* "difference" amid such varied work? A reader ignorant of Kipling's work who picked up an anonymous *Life's Handicap* and an anonymous *Limits and Renewals* would instantly recognize them as being by the same author. In what does this recognizable unity consist?

The short answer is, of course, that the work is all Kipling's. We have here a writer of so marked an individuality that whenever he will be himself and is not definitely parodizing—as for instance in "The Dream of Duncan Parrenness" or "The Enemies to Each Other"—he cannot be

mistaken for anyone else. Individualism in writing may be the distinction of genius or it may be merely a tiresome eccentricity. In Kipling it appears in both forms, but the qualities which constitute the real unity in his work are its brilliant lucidity, its momentum and its "virtuosity of sensation transferred." Kipling is not difficult to parody—after a fashion; it has been done deliberately or inadvertently time and again. Yet no such parody will have the authentic ring because the brilliance is lacking, the momentum is lacking, the virtuosity is lacking. From first to last Kipling's writings are stamped and hall-marked by an inescapable and irrecoverable individuality based on these three essences; and it is this which gives the unmistakable unity-in-diversity to all his work.

That such a hall-mark has its undesirable side has frequently been pointed out by his critics. There is too much Kipling, it has been said, altogether; he intrudes too often—sometimes to the falsification of his characters, sometimes even to the wreckage of the story. He, Kipling, the author, the showman, the ringmaster, the compere, bulks too large; the artistes are never given a chance. *Cette inevitable personalite de Kipling nous impose son obstinee presence*—in very truth! There is no denying the justice of this; if all the speeches which were really made by Kipling and not by his characters at all were listed and put together, they would make a formidable total. Yet such was the magic of the author, so compelling the gusto of his tale-telling, that the incongruities pass for the most part unnoticed; in other words, he makes us believe for the fleeting moment that the character in question did say these incredible and impossible things—and the fleeting moment is long enough for his genius to carry us on and away. When in "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney," Mulvaney is being urged by his friends to go out and shoot peacocks, it is utterly unbelievable that Ortheris should burst out with a quotation from—or a perversion of—Macaulay's Lays; yet that is what

Kipling—whose mind was a receiving-set for every sort of allusion—might have done in his place; Ortheris, therefore, at the expense of the most elementary probability, must do it also. No members of any Indian (or other) club would ever have nicknamed a man Blastoderm—though Kipling might have. Instances of this sort of thing can be multiplied almost indefinitely; they are partly the outcome of a mind stocked with quotations and references which rose to the surface as fish rise to fly, but even more of the Kipling egotism that kept him constantly thinking of himself. This is a grim reminder that Kipling was rarely capable of creating a character; he could combine a collection of observed traits into a composite which would pass in ordinary daylight for a likeness; but there are few if any of his stories in which any single character gathers flesh upon his bones, inspires that flesh with nerves and a brain and carries his progenitor away. The shrewd and caustic Francis Adams fell early upon this weakness; Kipling " cannot escape from his own subjectivity . . . so his characters melt away leaving only the impression of piquant and clever delineation." It is true; how then is it so rarely observed? Because of one of the tricks of Kipling's trade—his pace. As Gosse cautiously put it, " he does not provoke a critical suspension of judgment "; he keeps his characters in a whirl of continuous and diverting movement; they are never still long enough to be analysed and the tempo is so swift that in the gallop of the music the false note slips by unnoticed.

Francis Adams went on to complain that Kipling's false characterization had its parallel in false criticism; and it is undeniable that he was prone to blind worships and fidelities, which—to its detriment—invaded his work. We have already examined several of his fixed ideas—the Law, the glory of the soldier, the " white man's burden "; an almost parallel list could be composed of fixed types and fixed characters who recur repeatedly, like a single protean actor in a different dress. For example, much of his picture of

India is rendered unreal by the fixity of his conception of the " natives " on the one hand and the " sahibs " on the other. The " natives " were a memory of his childhood which told him that " natives " were servants and were, in that position, lovable, useful and dowered with clearly marked virtues and vices. The " sahibs " were the " grown-ups " of childhood magnified at a later stage of his career by the subaltern's veneration of the senior officer taken at face value. But the unreality of this is not confined to India; he finds " natives " and " sahibs " everywhere; and wherever there are " natives " and wherever there are " sahibs ", these original and Indian qualities inhere and that is Kipling's picture of them. Arnold Bennett pointed out maliciously but justly that the world-ruling magnates who travelled by airship across the Atlantic to suppress the disturbance at Chicago were simply Orde and Tallantire over again; the fact that one was a Japanese, one a Russian and one an Italian made no difference. Adams was right; Kipling made his characters in his head and he *made* them—they did not grow. *Fit, non nascitur.* It follows inevitably that one character pervades or tends to pervade them all; Rudyard Kipling himself.

This has been, however, a digression from the task of tracing in Kipling's career and in his writings some line of progress. Let us address ourselves to this once again and see if, by considering the matter from another angle, any sort of sequence will emerge. Frequent mention has already been made of Kipling " periods "—an " early," a " middle " and a " late "; if these have any meaning, it may well be argued, if they are identifiable as " periods " in the sense that the work of one is distinguishable from the work of another, then surely they must mark some stages of progress or decline. One may be better than another or worse; the graph may go up or down. In truth this is not so; the work of one period differs from the work of another but not by being " better " or " worse." But even if there

be no line of development there may be and should be a line of change, and from this point of view it may be of interest to survey an arrangement of Kipling's work based on chronological order.

Such an attempt will not have proceeded very far before it encounters an obstacle; the line we are following is constantly crossed and obscured by what can only be termed throwbacks. For one whose motto in life was "never go back the way you came" he went back in his writings to an astonishing extent; his nostalgia impelled him, every now and then, to hark back to his former hunting-grounds—not directly to repeat a success but to cull another flower from some special and much-loved garden. These nostalgic throwbacks persist throughout his writings; even in the latest of his collections we find an English child talking with the "natives" in the garden of an Indian gaol, and the resulting story might well have found a place among the miscellanea at the end of *Life's Handicap*. The effect of these excursions into the past, into forgotten themes and forgotten modes, is to draw a succession of red herrings across the trail and woefully to obscure that line of changing thought or intention we are setting out to discover. To this must be added another though less formidable difficulty—his habit of keeping certain stories or verses with him for periods of polishing which in some cases did actually extend into the classical second lustre. It is often difficult to say just when the inspiration or the mood of a given tale or poem actually held him; the publisher's date on the book or the month of issue of the magazine may be a quite unreliable guide. The difficulties that beset the maker of Kipling "periods" are therefore twofold—first, the constantly recurring nostalgic throwbacks, and second, Kipling's slow-fire methods of production. If these are kept constantly in mind, however, and their products pushed gently to one side when encountered, the industrious analyser should in time be rewarded by the emergence of such "line of pro-

gress" as Kipling's literary career can be made to show. But the warning must again be uttered that this will take the form not so much of an improvement or a falling-off as of a series of fresh starts and new experiments, and the experiments themselves may be deliberate exercises or they may be accidental acquisitions.

Bearing all this in mind, Kipling's adult prose work may perhaps be divided into the following broad "periods." (His verse fits chronologically into this "period" or that, and so far as any line of progress can be discerned in it, it will follow that of the prose.)

I. THE INDIAN PERIOD (approximate dates from *Plain Tales* (1887) to *Life's Handicap* (1891))

This period is almost solidly Indian in material and its "development" consists mainly in the advance from the baldly episodic narration of the *Tales* to such elaborately decorated and caparisoned work as "The Man who Would Be King" or "The Courting of Dinah Shadd." The change is at first a trifle uncomfortable; the rider's seat in the saddle is none too sure. In the book called *Wee Willie Winkie*, for example—which of all Kipling's collections shows the wildest oscillations between good and bad—it seems almost a toss-up whether a story shall be a masterpiece or a failure; the items vary from the balderdash of Morrowbie Jukes and his Strange Ride to the magnificence of Carnahan and Dravot, joint Kings of Kafiristan; from the magazine-story sentiment of "His Majesty the King" (not to mention the incredible Winkie himself) to the glorious realism of "The Drums of the Fore and Aft." For a time it seems doubtful if the rider will learn to control the bolting enthusiasms of his mount; doubtful too whether he has not so loaded it with embroidered harness that the creature can no longer see its way forward. But by the time we reach *Life's Handicap* these doubts are at rest. True, the book opens dis-

astrously with one of the worst stories he ever wrote, the immensely elaborate "Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney," a story which exhibits—nay, brandishes—almost every fault of which Kipling was capable; but this unfortunate prelude is followed by a sequence of four stories which alone would have established the reputation of any writer—"The Courting of Dinah Shadd," "On Greenhow Hill," "The Man Who Was" and "Without Benefit of Clergy." Of the first of these it might be said that it could be quoted almost *en bloc* to show Kipling's supremacy in writing. We are concerned here, however, less with merits than with the process of development; which is seen to consist, so far, in elaboration of the setting and in a vast extension of the range of colours: the technique of the Plain Tale no longer satisfies. One notices too the first appearance of a device constantly repeated thereafter—the selected built-up background which may be entirely independent of the actual tale; in "The Courting" this is supplied by the annual Indian Army manœuvres and the melancholy Irish singing and Mulvaney's epic past; in "Greenhow Hill" by the quite irrelevant native deserter and Ortheris methodically shooting him.

II. The London Period (approximately 1891 to 1893)

This is a period of bolder experiment—not all of it, by any means, successful. The most important of the new departures is the long novel—first *The Light that Failed,* and second *The Naulahka*. The former is not a very good book and the latter is a downright bad one. Perhaps Kipling essayed his "three-decker" too soon; perhaps the sustained progress of a novel, the slow growth of character and theme, were beyond one who so constantly obtruded himself into his puppets. Not altogether surprisingly—as he was himself to realize in time—neither *The Light* nor *The Naulahka* was any sort of success; in the former he seems himself to have

had little confidence inasmuch as he allowed it to appear in four different forms, two with happy endings and two with tragic—a fatal indecision which no book could hope to survive. . . . . The short stories of this period are to be found in the collection called *Many Inventions;* here too are a number of experiments and departures—" The Finest Story in the World," " Badalia Herodsfoot " (a terrain which, curiously enough, he never revisited), the first of the " obscurities "—" The Children of the Zodiac," and " Brugglesmith " (which may or may not be funny). But he is still surer on the older and more accustomed ground with " My Lord the Elephant " (which *is* funny), with " Love o' Women " and " His Private Honour." It is too early yet to call these " nostalgic throwbacks " but their presence—and their persisting vitality—may be noted.

III. The American (approximately from *The Jungle Books* (1895) to the *Just-So Stories* (1902))

The mere fact that both the *Jungle Books* and *Kim* were written during this period should prepare us to find the nostalgic element in command; and that is, in fact, the effect on Kipling's writings of those distressful years at Brattleboro. *Kim* is *the* nostalgic throwback of his career; it is said to have been first conceived during a visit of Lockwood Kipling's to Naulakha and quite manifestly the two of them, father and son, turned thirstily back to old days, old scenes, old happiness. At the same time Kipling made a gallant attempt to capture his America and the record of his work from the *Jungle Books* to the *Just-So's* is a measure of the extent to which America eluded his net. He began well with *Captains Courageous*—which is really a long short story; it is true that the crew of " We're Here " are an excellent example of his inability to create characters as opposed to figures; they are a set of marionettes each performing an individual antic and emitting an individual cry designed for

their easy identification; and the *ad hoc* assemblage of this selection of neatly contrasted types in one small Banks fishing-boat is well-nigh incredible: yet the writing is masterly, there are unforgettable scenes and twists of talk—the whole thing is Grade A Kipling. But it remains practically the sole American success. The remaining stories of the period are in *The Day's Work;* this is a blend of those experiments in the " sham-technical " which we have already noticed, and what we must now begin to class definitely as nostalgics. Two of the experiments are American but—significantly perhaps—neither is concerned with Americans, one being about a locomotive and the other about horses. (America's most noticeable contribution is perhaps the political tinge in " The Walking Delegate " and " The Mother Hive "; Kipling had so far—in India for instance—been impervious to politics.) But weighing *The Day's Work* as a whole, it can hardly be denied that the nostalgics have it again; the simple nostalgics—" The Tomb of His Ancestors " and " William the Conqueror "—and the more " difficult " —" The Bridge-Builders " and " The Brushwood Boy." The era closes with *Just-So Stories*—another experiment, this time in the childish; it is the sort of experiment most of us undertake at one stage of our lives, since every father worth calling a father devises stories for his babies. Kipling too, when the time came, launched out into baby-stories; it is interesting to see that—exhibitionist as ever—he falls into the trap which has closed over so many fathers—that of showing off.

IV. The First English Period (approximately from *Traffics and Discoveries* (1904) to *Rewards and Fairies* (1910))

One must begin by including in this period, to which it scarcely belongs, a complete intruder which is both an experiment and a new kind of throwback, *Stalky*. Why Kipling,

returning from America, should have plunged straight back to the days of Westward Ho! is an unanswerable question unless this was yet another instalment of the nostalgia engendered by life in Vermont. The other stories of the period fall into two classes—*Puck* with *Rewards and Fairies*, which are of a kind, and *Traffics and Discoveries* with *Actions and Reactions* which are diverse. The former group seem traceable to two sources—Kipling's passionate contemporary desire to identify himself with England and above all with Sussex with its "dead twelve-coffin deep," and an extension of that natural and familiar process which brought forth the *Just-So Stories*. Just as all fathers worthy of the name are at one stage inspired to invent stories for their offspring, so they are presently filled with a contempt for the school history-books and a corresponding desire to make history live. This impulse carried Kipling triumphantly through *Puck* and *Rewards and Fairies*; it eventually reached a climax and dissipated itself in his collaboration with C. R. L. Fletcher in a *History of England*—which was not noticeably more successful than others of its kind. For any line of progress, therefore, other than that which all normal fathers follow, we must look to the other two volumes—*Traffics and Discoveries* and *Actions and Reactions*. We shall find immediately one great new field opening and expanding—the Navy. Alas! its expansion was limited; it never improved on its highly promising beginning in "The Bonds of Discipline." Pyecroft, delightful and entertaining as he was, was not a second Mulvaney; the Navy was relegated to the elaborate practical joke; Pyecroft could court no Dinah Shadd, he had no such tragic messmates as Love-o'-Women, he had not even a Tim Vulmea; the best he could do in this line was "Click" Vickery, the satellite of Mrs. Bathurst, and he faded away through the vagaries of the early motor-car to the tedious absurdities of "The Horse Marines." Still, the Navy was a novelty and there was yet another field to be surveyed, mapped out and farm-

ed—the Boer War. (It was—perhaps naturally—never very satisfactorily tilled nor did it yield any very rare and refreshing fruit.) . . . In *Actions and Reactions* the experiments were spread over a wider area; the first of the great dog stories "Garm" (which should, however, perhaps be classed as a nostalgic); an unsuccessful attempt to rope in Central Africa; and the boyishly Wellsian flight "With the Night Mail.". . . Yet each of the two books did contain an innovation of first-rate importance and of unquestionable success: "They" in the earlier book and "An Habitation Enforced" in the later. It should have been instantly evident—strangely enough it was not—that the Edwardian Kipling was very far from sinking into a decline by way of miracle flying-ships and imitation Mulvaneys; it should have been evident that he had struck a vein of incalculable richness which he must subsequently work and on whose profits he could safely retire. With "They" and "An Habitation" the latest—and in many ways the finest—Kipling had been born.

V. THE SECOND ENGLISH PERIOD (approximately from *A Diversity of Creatures* (1917) to *Something of Myself* (1937))

The previous four periods have had this much in common —that each followed directly on its predecessor; in some cases there was even an overlap. But between the fourth and the fifth, there is a gap of seven years; indeed the gap may be made wider still according as *A Diversity of Creatures* (1917) is placed in this or the preceding period. It is a doubtful in time; it comes as a half-way house between *Rewards and Fairies* (1910) and *Debits and Credits* (1926). It fills in a sense, but only in a sense, the hiatus of the 1914-18 war; some of its stories are war stories but many belong to pre-war days. Yet in tone, theme and content its material seems to go better with the post-war than with the

pre-war books. It is made up of a curious new balance of pathology and slapstick; against " The Dog Hervey," " In the Same Boat " and " Swept and Garnished " are poised in hilarious counterpart " The Vortex " and " The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat." There is a suggestion of a man walking along a dark and lonely road and bellowing comic songs to cheer himself up. The obvious new line is along the pathologies; but it is a flourishing shoot, developing from " An Habitation Enforced " that gives us the two best stories in the book—" My Son's Wife " and " Friendly Brook." Both are vintage. . . . The interval between *Rewards and Fairies* and *Debits and Credits* is otherwise filled only with the ephemerae of the last war—*Fringes of the Fleet, Sea Warfare,* and so on; by *Letters of Travel* (an unsuccessful attempt to revive the brilliant reportage of *From Sea to Sea*); and by the meticulously compiled *Irish Guards* —too meticulously complied perhaps to attract other than a specialist's interest.

One might reasonably expect that the work which should emerge after the long blank which follows *A Diversity of Creatures* would show new features, that the long-deferred promise of " They " and " An Habitation Enforced " would at last be fulfilled. That hope is not disappointed. The last two collections—*Debits and Credits* and *Limits and Renewals*— are not altogether easy reading, certainly not such easy reading as *Plain Tales* or *Life's Handicap*; they demand attention, but they reward it. The old antitheses have died away; there is little slapstick and there is litte nostalgia and except for a bastard Pyecroft, the experiments break new ground only in France and in the life of St. Paul. The balance is now held between the two lines we saw struggling for survival in *A Diversity of Creatures*—the pathological curiosities and that strong stem that sprouted from the good soil of Sussex and its common folk. The pathological stories bulk largely but become no clearer in the telling; interest must centre on the others, for the line of Kipling will carry

us no further. We shall find the decor and setting more elaborate than ever and mixing—sometimes to confusion—with the fabric of the tale; but we shall find also a new quality of self-effacement in the author; young Strangwick in " A Madonna of the Trenches " or Humberstall in " The Janeites " speak their own tongue and tell their story in language which is not too " characteristic " to be true; the flowery eloquence of Mulvaney and the polysyllabic wise-cracks of Pyecroft have at last been outgrown.

And so, with *Thy Servant a Dog*—a renewed essay in the childish—and *Something of Myself,* which must surely have been written to tantalize, the long list ends.

This table of " periods " does not perhaps teach us very much but it does seem to show that, when the nostalgic throwbacks have been cleared away, definite lines of new experiments in style and material from time to time emerge; some of these are considered successful and are persevered with, some go no further than a single tryout. The period I have called the " First English " is particularly prolific in these adventures as if Kipling felt himself—as we know he did—running dry on the old motifs; that was the time when he became terrified that he would lose his fund of ideas and when he kept importuning his sister to lend him hers. Later, the search for novelty becomes less desperate and an era of consolidation sets in. The successive experiments do, however, indicate how his mind was moving and they fall into two distinct classes—those which he deliberately undertook and those which were more or less forced upon him by the changing incidents which the time-track brought into his life. In the former class may be put " The Children of the Zodiac," " They," " The Brushwood Boy," the " A.B.C." stories, " On the Gate," " Dayspring Mishandled "; there seems no assignable reason, other than his own conscious volition to strike out a new line, why these should have been written. Other experiments—*Captains Courageous,* " Badalia Herodsfoot," the earlier Navy stories

—are as obviously the fruit of his encounter with fresh incident. Even the pathological stories probably derive mainly from the decline in his health and his increasing association with doctors in his later years. If the first class is the more intrinsically interesting, the second class—the stories which came to him in a sense ready-made—is the more numerous; nor is this surprising when one remembers that his peculiar strength was in recorded observation and that his most trusted and successful recipe was the decorated and manipulated truth. So far as short stories go, it is perhaps the best recipe for anyone. Kipling was strangely dependent upon an outside supply and strangely receptive to atmosphere and association. In one of his stories he speaks of "the woman's gift" of taking on the colour of the person with whom for the time being she is associated; if this is in fact a particularly feminine characteristic, then it is yet another of the many feminine characteristics that showed themselves in Kipling. One can make a good guess, from reading any of his stories, at the kind of man he has been meeting; and in the latter-day stagnation at Bateman's the adventure of new incident had given place very largely to the adventure of new acquaintance. He grabbed eagerly at anything that came his way—making more of it sometimes than it would carry—and when, *faute de mieux,* he fell back upon himself he found a mine whose ores varied greatly in richness. At their best they were the pure gold; at their worst they verged upon dross. He spoke of his good fortune in having the cards dealt him at the right moment; for nothing perhaps was he more dependent on the celestial Dealer than for his stories.

There remains a question which must be faced. What was the secret of Kipling's art; what were the tricks of his trade? It would require a book much more ambitious in scope than this one and more specifically devoted to purely literary criticism to answer these questions in detail. One need not

however be a Leeb-Lundberg to provide a short and a passably adequate answer.

To a great extent he has indeed himself laid his cards on the table. In *Something of Myself* we are told of the elaborate pruning and polishing, the "working over," the carefully selected framework, background and setting, but above all the necessity for letting the tale lie by for a period and then cutting ruthlessly. "A tale from which pieces have been raked out is like a fire that has been poked. One doesn't know the operation has been performed but everyone feels the effect." That is shrewd comment memorably expressed; let whoever doubts that Kipling put it into his own practice address himself to the task of cutting further one of the published stories in such a way as to leave no noticeable gaps. It is not an easy operation. It is to this "working-over," this careful excision of unessentials, that Kipling's stories owe one of their primary qualities—balance. This balance is generally so perfect that one fails to notice it till it is upset—as, for instance, in "The Comprehension of Private Copper," which is a smooth-running story till its equilibrium is wrecked by the irrelevant politics at the end. The inlay is usually so level and the setting so carefully toned that these too escape notice till they fail—as, for instance, in "A Deal in Cotton" which is an Indian story forced into an African background and is full of false notes as a result. But these are exceptions; normally Kipling's stories are balanced with the precision of a chronometer. It is a quality which will not in itself make a short story great but without which a great short story cannot be achieved.

Kipling was equally aware of—and equally frank about—that other quality in his writing which made so much for its success; his genius—for it was no less than genius—in the choice of words. "Words," as he told the Royal Academy dinner of 1906, "may become alive and walk up and down in the hearts of the hearers," and he urged the boys of Wellington College, six years later, to "get your

words." At the time of his death the *Yorkshire Evening Post* published an article by Patrick Kirwan who recalled an interview given him by Kipling. Kipling said "Writing is like fishing. You cast your hook in the stream—that's the story part; but to catch anything you must bait the hook; you must bait your hook with words, gaudy words." That has the authentic ring, unserviceable as it may be as advice to the ambitious novice—for few indeed could bait their hooks with such words, gaudy words, as could Kipling. It was in this sense that George Moore described him as writing "copiously"; "who else has written with the whole language since the Elizabethans?" Who indeed? In lilt, matter and mannerisms it is always possible to imitate Kipling up to a point; but where all his imitators break down is over the vocabulary; the disciple and the parodist are defeated alike by the same deficiency. They simply cannot command the words: Lawson in Australia and Service in Canada write only in a sort of Basic Kipling. Kipling's stories were no doubt exquisitely balanced and poised but it was the words that set them spinning; it was to the words, the unique inimitable words, that they owed that peculiar momentum that caught up the reader and whirled him away in its rush. How many of us have had the experience of going to the Kipling shelf to verify a quotation, the name of a character or what not, and then of standing there while the clock ticked on and on, immersed in the twentieth reading of some tale we knew almost by heart? And by what other authors have we been thus recurrently enslaved?

At times of course the words, gaudy words, carried Kipling himself away; his habitual and sometimes tiresome exuberance asserted itself; he overwrote and overstated; began once more to "paint with a spade." There were times when he had too many words altogether, when, it would seem, he liked them all so much that he could bear to dispense with none of them. Lines of verse and passages of prose result whose effect is positively bludgeoning. He

becomes over-excited—in the same way as he becoms over-excited in his funny stories or as he was over-excited in a different way when he suggested that it would have been a good thing if Ortheris had shot then and there the young officer who struck him, or as he over-excited himself—with better cause—about the Germans in the last war. " The German is typhoid or plague—*Pestis Teutonicus*." I am not suggesting that this was too bad for the Germans, but it was certainly too bad for Kipling; King of blessed memory would have done much better. The worst of words, gaudy words, is that they induce moods, gaudy moods, and these in turn lead to gaudy writing. But let us not remember these lapses into heavy-handedness in one whose touch was normally so deft.

Indeed, far too much has been made of his " spade-painting " tactics, distressing as their results may sometimes have been, and too little credit has been given him for his contrary virtue of restraint. As a random example of this take the death of Michael Turrell in "The Gardener": " Just after Michael had written to Helen that there was nothing special doing and therefore no need to worry, a shell-splinter dropping out of a wet dawn killed him at once. The next shell uprooted and laid down over the body what had been the foundation of a barn wall, so neatly that no one but an expert could have guessed that anything unpleasant had happened." Deliberate understatement can, of course, be a bravado as nauseating as its opposite and of this too Kipling was sometimes guilty. But there is little in common between the aggressive callousness of the early Indian stories and the passage just quoted or the almost terrifying restraint in the closing paragraphs of that (over-excited) story " The Army of a Dream." It is worth while to remember, while censuring him for extravagance in words, that he could practise economy as well.

In the world of men and affairs Kipling was always tremendously impressed by the virtue of efficiency; a machine

was interesting because it worked—just *so*; a man was interesting because he knew his job—any job—and carried it out with skill and precision. He brought these criteria into the making of his stories. In order that a tale may be balanced, in order that it may spin on its destined course with the momentum that defies halt or question, it must be exactly patterned throughout. This is an art which may rise to the glory of a cathedral window or fall to the synchronizing of a clockwork toy: in Kipling there are times when it does both. But it is never wholly absent and this perfect and deliberate patterning is a contributory factor to that swiftness of motion that rushes the reader headlong from sentence to sentence and page to page. Indeed, it is in the consummation of this essential art of balance, the precise arrangements of pieces, that the craftsman in Kipling rises so high above his rivals. Dixon Scott has pointed this out in his excellent and understanding essay; " Prise out a sentence," he writes, " and you feel it would fall with a clink, leaving a slot that would never close up. Replace it and it locks back like type in a forme." It is true; yet this brilliant patterning has its dangers; at all costs it must not show, it must not give itself away. And just now and then—more often in the verse perhaps than in the prose—we do overhear the mechanism at work, the rustle of the gears, the snap of the locks; we have too clear a glimpse of the framework on which the craftsman moulded, the scaffolding on which the impressive edifice was raised. The method has other drawbacks. Kipling had a passion for the metaphors of the workshop; how often do we read of work " carven," " inlaid," " filed to a hairsbreadth "? He liked things that would cut and fit; but human character, if it is to be real character, will not always cut and fit. And the cutting and fitting, the moulding and contriving, show sometimes too clearly on the emerging figure and the spell is broken. It is broken indeed, for the reader will pause and ask himself, " How much of all this impression

I am receiving is a trick of technique? How much of it is bluff, how much of it is label designed to recur and to be recognized when recurring? How much of it all is done by *ad hoc* dialogue, by dialect, catchwords, antitheses, complementary colours, technical spoof?" The honest answer will then be "A good deal." It says everything for Kipling's craftsmanship that it could so long and so efficiently disguise the regular mechanics of his construction and the frequent barrenness of his characterization.

Use has been made of the expression "technical spoof"—what Adams expressed otherwise as Kipling's "peculiar pedantries." He indulged in these for two obvious reasons—the use of the trade word eked out that know-all pretentiousness which pervaded his early work and it contributed also not a little to verisimilitude. But there was a third reason; he was irresistibly attracted by the sheer delight of these outlandish and pungent sounds. Here were "gaudy words" with a vengeance—"garboard strake" for instance, or "epicycloidal gears" or "vacuoles." (How he would have enjoyed "bull-dozer"!) At times, of course, he tripped over the niceties of professional jargon. But the occasions on which he was detected were amazingly few and we are left to guess at the "miraculous escapes" whose existence *Something of Myself* confesses. Most frequently the "technical spoof" succeeded in its object and—spoofed.

In the same way as he was lured by trade and technical jargon he was lured—and often less happily—by oddities of dialect. He was bold in the matter of dialects almost to rashness; he essayed Irish, Scots, Yorkshire, Cockney and German-English; and in none of them was he much more than passably good. Compare Mulvaney's Irish with the Irish of Somerville and Ross; or the Scots of McPhee in "Bread Upon the Waters" with Wandering Willie or Thrawn Janet. Yet, as with the technicalities, so with the dialects, his daring was rewarded; his mistakes for the most

part require an expert to detect them, and—as with all his stories—the rush and sweep and excitement of the narrative carries even the expert unquestioningly through.

In all these cases—the technical spoof, the Scotticism, the brogue—Kipling fell under the lure of the recondite exclusive word, the trade name or label. The *apt* word—for which he had a most peculiar genius—is a different thing. So is the pregnant phrase—illuminating like a lamp or pinning down like a marker. Mulvaney is particularly rich in these—a " *basin-faced* fool of a cavalryman " or Dempsey's eyelid shutting down over his eye " *like the wing of a sick crow* " or Tim Coulan's brother, cleft by a Pathan knife and going down " grinnin' *by sections*." The very first flash of the real and vintage Kipling is of his nature; it comes in *Plain Tales* at that awful moment when Miss Beighton deliberately shot away Barr-Saggott and his bracelet and when " the deep stillness was broken by a little snubby mottled half-grown girl saying in a shrill voice of triumph, ' Then *I've* won! ' " In a single half-line that nameless girl stands out, collecting into herself, her satisfaction and her deficiencies all the extreme embarrassment of the occasion.

And with the illuminating word goes the aptly chosen and arresting name; for these Kipling—on whom the gods had bestowed one of them—had an almost unique gift. Five minutes spent in flicking over his pages will produce a crop of Lethabie Groombrides, Herodsfoots, Hauksbees, Pinecoffins, Bat Masqueriers, each memorable, unusual, completely individual and wholly apt, yet credible and free from eccentricity. Perhaps he collected them as he encountered them—" Verschoyle," for instance, was the name of one of Henley's assistants and there were " Chapins " at Brattleboro—perhaps he invented them. Either way it was a minor touch of genius.

A writer so strong in " words, gaudy words " might well be expected to excel in description, and most of Kipling's

admirers, if they were asked to cite a favourite passage, would fall back on one of the set scenes rather than one of the set dialogues. There are familiar examples—the Grand Trunk Road in *Kim,* the descent of the Khyber Pass in "Love o' Women," the Gau Mukh—indeed the whole Chitor episode—in "Letters of Marque." But his wizardry in this respect is lavish; one can pick the page almost at random and light upon a picture. This for instance—again from "Letters of Marque":

"The Englishman lay out at high noon on the crest of a rolling upland crowned with rock, and heard, as a loafer had told him he would hear, the 'set of the day,' which is as easily discernible as the change of tone between the rising and the falling tide. At a certain hour the impetus of the morning dies out, and all things, living and inanimate, turn their thoughts to the prophecy of the coming night. The little wandering breezes drop for a time, and, when they blow afresh, bring the message. The 'set of the day,' as the loafer said, has changed; the machinery is beginning to run down; the unseen tides of the air are falling. This moment of change can only be felt in the open and in touch with the earth, and once discovered, seems to place the finder in deep accord and fellowship with all things on earth."

Surely the man—the boy, rather—who wrote that had more than the beginning of wisdom! Or—choosing haphazard again—there is the opening to "The City of Dreadful Night" in *Life's Handicap*:

"The dense wet heat that hung over the face of the land, like a blanket, prevented all hope of sleep in the first instance. The cicalas helped the heat and the yelling jackals the cicalas. It was impossible to sit still in the dark, empty echoing house and watch the punkah beat the dead air. So, at ten o'clock of the night, I set my walking-stick on end in the middle of the garden, and waited to see how it would fall. It pointed directly down the moonlit road

that leads to the City of Dreadful Night. The sound of its fall disturbed a hare. She limped from her form and ran across to a disused Mohammedan burial-ground, where the jawless skulls and rough-butted shank-bones heartlessly exposed by the July rain, glimmered like mother o' pearl on the rain-channelled soil. The heated air and the heavy earth had driven the very dead upward for coolness' sake. The hare limped on; snuffed curiously at a fragment of a smoke-stained lamp-shard, and died out, in the shadow of a clump of tamarisk trees."

That passage, chosen at random, might well have been chosen with deliberation; it is not only first-class of its kind but it is an excellent sample of the Trick—the Trick which cannot be analysed, but of which, as in his own simile of the poked fire, "everyone feels the effect."

Pictorial writing, of course, has its dangers and especially in the case of such a writer as Kipling who was always prone to overdo. The carefully coloured and illuminated passage has an unhappy knack of turning into the purple patch. It is yet another tribute to Kipling's genius and to the sureness and reliability of his touch that, among so many opportunities, this so rarely happens. The degree of purple which is permissible in any patch is to some extent a question of taste—as much so as the colours of a woman's dress or the chintz in the drawing-room. There may be some, for instance, who find the opening of "The Captive," deliberately painted "as hard as a public-house sign," a little bilious:

"Between the snow-white cutter and the flat-topped honey-coloured rocks on the beach the green water was troubled with shrimp-pink prisoners of war bathing."

And is there a suggestion of overwriting in this description of the sea-noises as heard on No. 267 Torpedo-boat?

"It drummed tackily to gather my attention, coughed, spat, cleared its throat, and, on the eve of that portentous communication, retired up stage as a multitude whispering.

Anon, I caught the tramp of armies afoot, the hum of crowded cities awaiting the event, the single sob of a woman and the dry roaring of wild beasts. A dropped shovel, clanging on the stokeroom floor was, naturally enough, the unbarring of arena gates; our sucking uplift across the crest of some little swell, nothing less than the hailing forth of new worlds; our half-turning descent into the hollow of its mate, the abysmal plunge of God-forgotten planets.''

Compare the first pair of extracts with the second; perhaps the later *are* "painting with a spade.'' He was aware of it; for he wrote in this very story ("Their Lawful Occasions'') in a passage which itself burns and blazes on the page: "My gold I have lacquered down to dull bronze, my purples overlaid with sepia of the sea, and for hell-hearted ruby and blinding diamond I have substituted pale amethyst and mere jargoon.'' . . . Sometimes, perhaps, but by no means always.

The question was posed, "What were the tricks of Kipling's trade?'' But indeed the word "trick'' is a word too debased for the context. His trick was of the craftsman and not of the charlatan. What then, rather, was his craft? One might say perhaps that part of it was to regard his work as a thing of shape, dimensions and substance; it is always outside himself and away from him; he stands back from it and it has for him all the solidity of an external object. The story is seen as a construction; it balances and it has a framework into which patterns of definite and preconceived shape are fitted. The pieces must lock in the frame, they must be exquisitely dovetailed and adapted, because presently the whole thing is to be set in very rapid motion. A fire of brilliant words is to be kindled beneath it, on the wings of whose flames it must rise and spin and gather its irresistible momentum. There must be nothing slipshod or loose or unfinished about this mechanism; it will be subjected to extreme stresses which it must be able to

resist; there must be no flaw to set up friction and slow down pace; and it must be balanced to a hair. To produce such an object—and Kipling produced a hundred of them—only the very finest craftsmanship will serve; if there are tricks of the trade they must be called into service; and the ultimate ounce of pains and skill must alike be thrown into the task.

If Kipling found and adopted some such recipe for the form and construction of his stories, he had also a regular repertoire of subjects. The same *sort* of story occurs time and again in his collections and several of the ideas that delighted him at twenty-two continued to delight him for the rest of his days. In *Plain Tales from the Hills*, the first of these collections, there are forty different—or more or less different—stories; it is worth while to look over these from the point of view of a stock-pot into which he dipped back at intervals. (Incidentally, the book initiates the convention that gave birth to so much of Kipling's later verse—the "Chapter Headings"; by the time we reach the end of it, these have developed into the full-length explanatory parallel in verse; and the first example of this, the problem of the Goat and the Stone and the Tarn, is also an arguable "poem" to start the controversy—still raging—as to whether or not he wrote "poetry.") To the story recipes *Plain Tales* contributes the screaming farce, based on the same custard-pie simplicity that endured right through to "Aunt Ellen"; the deliberately grim with its matter-of-fact bravado over unpalatable death; the vagaries of native life served up with more or less of mumbo-jumbo; the high-and-mighty overthrown by the transcendent cunning of those infinitely inferior; string-pulling Woman who can work all miracles; the paying off of scores; the redemption of some undesirable—or the failure to redeem him; and the anecdote told by a recurring narrator who is gifted not only with a distinctive dialect but with a fund of racy and picturesque expression designed to divert even at the expense of

plausibility. Not many of Kipling's more popular themes are absent from this list; if we except the horrors, the pathologies and the humanized animals and machines, hardly any. The Barriesque, all-knowing, all-contriving, all-miracle-working woman, who pervades the femininity of the Simla stories, fails—like many better things—to survive the sea voyage to England; but most of the other recipes endure hardily. Four at least of those first tried out in *Plain Tales* live on into *Debits and Credits*—if one allows the substitution of the native life of Sussex for the native life of the Punjab. It may be inferred, therefore, that these were the lines on which Kipling's imagination most happily ran; these were the notions, he thought, which made the best stories.

There is another point worth noticing in regard to these early recipes; behind most of the Plain Tales one may suspect "the undoctored incident that actually occurred." They read at least as if each of them was a distorted and embellished truth. Perhaps the best short stories are always written in this manner; at any rate it was a method greatly favoured by Kipling—the decorated incident, the fusion of two disparate incidents, the word-o'-mouth anecdote amplified and retouched out of all knowing. He required some basis or foundation of reality on which to work and this was one reason why he was always anxious to collect so much of it—and no more—as was needed to carry the superstructure of imagination. Where plain detail was concerned, this could be got from his "bird-watching"; where it was a question of theory or principle, he snatched at and, as we have seen, clung to the first attractive working hypothesis. In much the same way he was at his best when drawing—not from the life, that was never his forte—but from a conception the life had put into his mind. We have already noticed the influence of Q.M.S. Bancroft, the ancestral Mulvaney; Sir George MacMunn tells us that he could recognize the central figures in "Danny Deever" and "The Jacket";

the Regiment of "The Lost Legion" is known and there was even a real basis for "The Ballad of East and West." "Sabretache" has it that there was a real Jack Barrett and a real Mrs. Hauksbee (though Mrs. Fleming says *she* was a composite) and a real Strickland. There is said to have been a real Kim in Simla—as there was certainly a real Lama who came to see Lockwood Kipling in the House of Images. Lurgan Sahib was a well-known Simla jeweller with a history far more startling than Kim's. And doubtless one could go on listing these originals and prototypes almost indefinitely; it is merely a question of knowing and recognizing the clues.

We have now uncovered some at least of the tricks of Kipling's trade and the way in which he Told his Lie—the "words, gaudy words," the bluff and the spoof, the labelled and identifiable recurring character, the favourite and repeated recipe, the "improved" model, the core of decorated truth. We have studied some aspects of the craft—the mechanical balance, the patterned framework, the high-speed engine revolving so rapidly as to defy examination. But indeed, the reputation given him for trade-trickery is a false one; it is long since he did anything to earn it, and its survival so late and so ineptly is but one more pernicious result of that phenomenon we noted at the outset of this book—that almost all serious criticism of Kipling belongs to a departed age. Labels have adhered to him which would almost certainly have been removed by those who first attached them—had they lived long enough to do so; they have adhered because, though they have long conveyed nothing but false information, no critic of standing has had the courage or the honesty to take them off. From the beginning of this century onwards there is very little of the charlatan about Kipling's work, very little deliberate camouflage or dodgery, very few revivals of that mannered boy who took first Simla and then London by storm. Man is an imperfect creature and it may be that other faults

arose in the place of those which disappeared—an excess of decoration which at times masked the true course of the story, a method of narration so indirect as to involve obscurity. But these are not the faults of a trickster; there is no deliberate sleight of hand, no "cleverness," no deception. The frauds with which Kipling has most consistently been charged—trick-writing, word-sharping, the ready-made suit and the fake currency—these came with his youth and with his youth they passed away. There remained the blazing words—"hell-hearted ruby and blinding diamond," the balance, the speed, the momentum, the impetus, the life. Some very great stories result.

VIII

"'OMER AND 'IS LYRE"

"Oh, it's verses this and verses that and writing 'em is wrong,
But it's 'special type and vellum' when you hit on something strong"

T. W. H. Crosland

Many people have been shockingly unfair to Kipling's verse; it is almost as if they had been annoyed by it—by its easy brilliance, its felicitous and prolific flow. In the case of some of his earlier critics this may indeed have been the truth. Kipling's verse came rushing like a sea tide into a lagoon where "poets" wrought slowly and solemnly in a dim religious and literary light; they turned and polished, they erased and substituted, they were apt to make a pother over a triolet and a day's work out of a quatrain—and to spend the next day telling each other all about it. Now

came this impudent invader reeling off " verse " by the yard—and, what made his advent doubly irritating, it was often better " verse " than that which resulted from their own academic labours. More vexatious still, he sold it for large sums. His seniors took their revenge; they denied that the verse had merit, they spoke contemptuously of banjos and smoking-rooms and patter songs. When this was not enough, they fell back upon a second and more insidious line of attack; Kipling's work could be belittled by denying that it was " poetry " (which it had never claimed to be) and by denouncing its lack of those poetic virtues which it is not incumbent on " verse " to exhibit. And just as the labels of " Jingo " and " journalist " stuck firmly to his prose (we are a great people for labels and we furnish them with wellnigh imperishable gum) so the labels " banjo," " tinkle " and " music-hall " adhered to his verse long after it had risen to a quality to which these descriptives were altogether inapplicable.

To do any sort of justice to its subject, this should, of course, be a book and not a chapter in a book. There are eight hundred and five pages in the Inclusive Edition of Kipling's verse, comprising some six hundred separate and discrete items—and the Inclusive Edition is itself by no means complete. But if this rules out any detailed examination within the limits of a single chapter in a book, it should also reassure us that Kipling did possess one of the attributes of any major poet—volume. In output he was at least adequate. Does he then qualify by that other test—the slow undeviating ascent of Parnassus from the flowers and forests of the foothills to the ice-clear and lonely majesty of the summit? It cannot be said that he does; as with the stories, so with his verse; it is born practically at full bloom; the graph of its heights and depths will once again be mainly a sierra. The curious arrangement he himself adopted in the Inclusive Edition—an arrangement some of whose oddities have never been satisfactorily explained and to which,

tantalizingly as usual, he has given us no guide—does have this advantage that, proceeding in no fixed chronological order, it often throws into juxtaposition on adjoining pages poems separated in the actual writing by many years. In merit these will commonly appear equal. It can, however, be said that whereas in the case of the stories there develops with the passing of time a rising aim, an attack on higher targets, an advance into more difficult territory, there is—after the earlier stages—no such advance in the verses. T. S. Eliot has written " The late poems like the late stories with which they belong, are sometimes more obscure, because they are trying to express something more difficult than the early poems. They are the poems of a wiser and more mature writer." Is this really so? They are the poems of a more introspective writer, of a writer more concerned with thought than with action, to that extent they " belong with " the stories; but they do not convey to us the same impression of a move to a new plane which we feel in the prose. It would be easier to argue from examples of his verse that as he certainly fell off in output, so also he fell off in vitality. Compare, for instance, " For All We Have and Are " (1914) with " Hymn Before Action " (1896) and " Recessional " (1897) which almost immediately precede it in the book. The first is saved only by a magnificent concluding couplet: indeed there were contemporary reviewers who hailed it as the poorest poem ever written by a man of genius. Something between a third and a half of his best and most celebrated work was written before 1903; and while the later work is still competent and facile, it lacks the tremendous impetus, the explosive drive of the earlier; the result—as in " The Fabulists " or " Macdonough's Song " is to seem merely pretentious. And there seems to be a middle period which quite definitely sags. Not surprisingly this corresponds with the time when he was living in the greatest contentment, the pre-war " squire-and-parson " period at Bateman's; did he then compose so many doggerel

or improving jingles for his children or for Boy Scouts young and old that he became slovenly and careless? He could write really excellent doggerel—for instance " In the Neolithic Age " where " There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays, And every single one of them is right "; but in this Middle Period he lost the art; for the audacities of rhyme and rhythm he substituted the flat banalities of daily speech. He recovered of course from this but the trough of the Middle Period is more abrupt and its bed more flat in his verse than in his prose.

The arrangement of the items in the Inclusive Edition, is, as has been said, arbitrary and puzzling, but at least it starts honestly with the *Departmental Ditties*. Eliot, in his selection, dismisses the whole of these as " Juvenilia " but they were not of course the real Juvenilia which were written at Westward Ho! or for the Burne-Jones family magazine *The Scribbler* and are—as juvenilia are more apt to be—frequently of funereal gravity. " Job's Wife," for instance, opens boldly " Curse now thy God and die, for all is done " —an exordium at which most adult writers would balk. It is difficult to see how the *Ditties* can be called more " juvenile " than much that came after; their satire has an adolescent cockiness no doubt but much of it is shrewd, and in accomplishment at least the work is adult. When Gosse considered them " not much above the 'Ali Babas' and the 'Aliph Cheems' " he had surely a very imperfect recollection of these latter works. The *Ditties* pass one test of any such verse—they stick in the mind at a single reading; the ill-treatment of Jack Barrett or the disappointment of Rustum Beg are imprinted upon the receptive mind as with a rubber stamp and one reader at any rate has never been able to rid himself of " Shun—shun the bowl! That fatal facile drink Has ruined many geese who dipped their quills in't; Bribe, murder, marry, but steer clear of Ink ". . . and so on. One of his Lahore editors has recorded that he composed the *Ditties* to " tunes in his head ": they hammer

those tunes into the heads of others. But the *Ditties* are not by any means all "jingles"; instance, "The Last Department":

> When leave, long overdue, none can deny;
> When idleness of all Eternity
> Becomes our furlough, and the marigold
> Our thriftless, bullion-minting Treasury. . . .

"Pagett" is too mordant to be a "jingle" and the "Lovers' Litany" and "The Plea of the Simla Dancers" would not have disgraced Austin Dobson. These can only be called jingles in so far as the words move so trippingly and are so completely interlocked that they impinge as a whole upon the mind—and stay there. This was a gift he never lost; later it comes back in "Now it is not good for the Christian's health to hustle the Aryan brown"; later still in "This is the mouth-filling song of the race that was run by a Boomer." This ready memorability is not necessarily a symptom of poetry or even of high-class verse; it consorts rather with limericks and music-hall songs; but it implies at least that individual words have been well chosen and well combined into a single and cohesive whole. The merit will then depend upon the words concerned and in words—as ever—Kipling was invincible.

This leads us to what was perhaps the outstanding quality of Kipling's verse—the effect one can only describe as "punch" or, under another metaphor, *crescendo*. It is conspicuous and dominating throughout. It is a quality better illustrated by example than by description. Perhaps its most striking instance is in the poem already mentioned, "For All We Have and Are," where the terrific "punch" of the finish lifts and carries away unquestioned a composition which has wobbled more than once. "What stands if Freedom fall? Who dies if England live?" is finally

redeeming. Other examples are not far to seek and they come from all periods. As in " Arithmetic on the Frontier ":

> A scrimmage in a Border Station—
> A canter down some dark defile—
> Two thousand pounds of education
> Drops to a ten-rupee *jezail*—
> The Crammer's boast, the Squadron's pride,
> Shot like a rabbit in a ride!

As in " The Explorer " (magnificent thoroughout):

> Till a voice, as bad as conscience, rang interminable changes
> On one everlasting whisper day and night repeated—so;
> Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the Ranges.
> Something lost behind the Ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!

As in " The Old Men ":

> The Lamp of our Youth will be utterly out, but we shall subsist on the smell of it
> And whatever we do, we shall fold our hands and suck our gums and think well of it.
> Yes, we shall be perfectly pleased with our work, and that is the Perfectest Hell of it!

As in the last two lines of " The Virginity ":

> We've only one virginity to lose,
> And where we lost it there our hearts will be!

As in " Hadramauti ":

> He was the son of an ape, ill at ease in his clothing.
> He talked with his head, hands and feet, I endured him with loathing.

> Whatever his spirit conceived his countenance showed it
> As a frog shows in a mud-puddle. Yet I abode it!

As in "The Gods of the Copybook Headings":

> As it will be in the future, it was at the birth of Man—
> There are only four things certain since Social Progress began;—
> That the Dog returns to his Vomit and the Sow returns to her Mire,
> And the burnt fool's bandaged finger goes wabbling back to the Fire . . .

The alternative or *crescendo* effect is produced by a piling-up of nouns and adjectives or both combined; as in "The Galley-Slave":

> She will need no half-mast signal, minute-gun or rocket-flare.
> When the cry for help goes seaward she will find her servants there.
> Battered chain-gangs of the orlop, grizzled drafts of years gone by,
> To the bench that broke their manhood, they shall lash themselves and die.
> Hale and crippled, young and aged, paid, deserted, shipped away—
> Palace, cot and Lazaretto shall make up the tale that day . . . .

Or in "The Song of Seven Cities":

> Rain on rain-gorged channels raised the water-levels round them,
> Freshet backed on freshet swelled and swept their world from sight;

Till the emboldened floods linked arms and, flashing for-
    ward, drowned them—
Drowned my Seven Cities and their peoples in one night!

There may, of course, be those on whose ears this continuous drumming is insupportable; who become as it were punch-drunk. And perhaps this quality of punch and *crescendo* may be, in "poetry," an ingredient even undesirable; there its place should be taken by profundity of thought or loveliness of image. But it is an essential concomitant of what, for want of a better word, we call "verse." This is a form which has not been—perhaps cannot be—defined; but we all understand what it means, or at any rate each of us understands what it means to himself. "Verse"—first-class verse—must have "punch"; it must have words, colour, swing. (If it has enough of all these, does it become "poetry"? That is another question.) Among its words it can include *vox populi*—slang and colloquialisms—as "poetry" cannot: and one catches here and there embedded in Kipling's verses phrases which one feels sure he actually heard said—"Not with this wind blowing and this tide"; or "and five damned trawlers with their syreens blowing Heading the whole review": these take their place as naturally as a tavern phrase in the mouth of Falstaff. Of swing we have already spoken; as to colour, Kipling is, of course, in his element; the purple patch that tends to disfigure prose but serves to embellish verse. And what colour he commands! In three very different settings take "The Last Suttee," "Lukannon" and "Alnaschar and the Oxen" ("My Sussex Cattle feeding in the Dew"). Incidentally, the approximate dates given for these three poems are 1889, 1894-5 and 1919-26; a fairly convincing example of our sierra!

There is another quality by which verse must be judged—technique. Technique is all-important to "verse"—a fact many verse writers have found it convenient to forget;

"verse" differs from "poetry" at least in this, that if it has not accomplishment, if it has not execution, it fails. And from *Departmental Ditties* to *Limits and Renewals* Kipling's execution is at worst professional and at best masterly. There is little point in searching out blunders ("The blinding blaring rain-squalls lash and veer"; "Heaven is beautiful, earth is ugly. . . . So we must not look where the snail and slug lie"); in eight hundred and five pages of verse it would be inhuman if there were not some dubious lines. How many downright terrible lines are there in Shakespeare, Byron, Wordsworth?

In the case of the short stories we made an examination of the earliest volume, *Plain Tales,* and searched there for recipes which were to recur; it might be idle to submit *Departmental Ditties* to a similar scrutiny from the point of view of the verse that was to follow it; we shall find, however, within its comparatively few pages many of the styles—the metres and the methods—on which Kipling was to base the great bulk of his subsequent work. We shall find those "echoes" from Browning and Swinburne which as Eliot so well points out were no mere imitations; unless it be imitation to take another man's spade and dig with it in a fresh plot. We shall find too a predilection for running metres—whether in long lines or in short. He enjoyed working in these metres, which fell happily in with that gallop to a crisis which represents so many of his poems; and it is with variants of them that he most regularly experiments. Blank verse attracted him for a time but he abandoned it; perhaps he found it too slow and sedate, too easy of accomplishment, since a "fatal facility" in this medium must tend always to quantity rather than quality; perhaps—though this is much less likely—he was moved by the strictures of Adams upon his earlier efforts—Adams calling the Two Viceroys and "Giffen's Debt" "detestable paraphrases," though less totally vile no doubt

than "Evarra." Adams was unfair; for much of Kipling's blank verse goes very well. But besides the lilt and vigour of the running metres Kipling enjoyed their difficulties and their discipline; the trick—in a sense it is a trick—of fitting into a single sweeping movement the rapid rhyme, the double rhyme or the recurring or the deliberately *outre* and spectacular. He was very bold in his metres; there was nothing he would not tackle. Witness, in *Departmental Ditties*, the very troublesome Edgar Allen Poe trochees of the poem about the tonga and its conversational coupling-bar; the awkward Browning staccato of "A Tale of Two Cities." Later he could succeed with perhaps the most difficult exercise of all—the sestina, of which he makes as good a *tour de force*—it is all the thing can be—as has been done. In fact, so far as power went of devising a rhythm appropriate to his sense and of managing it with complete competence, he was very rarely at a loss; and the variety of his achievement in this field is astonishing. With all this, few writers, whether of "verse" or of "poetry" have made the rhyme so serve the sense instead of the other way round. Among the more distinguished of our poets it is too often only too obvious that a certain idea was expressed because it brought in—or even dragged in—the necessary rhyme. In Kipling the rhyme seems completely natural; it is as if he said what he intended to say and said it in rhyme by fortunate chance. Endless illustrations of this could be cited; perhaps one of the best is "The Prodigal Son":

> So I was a mark for plunder at once,
> And lost my cash (can you wonder) at once,
> But I didn't give up and knock under at once,
>   I worked in the Yards for a spell.
> Where I spent my nights and my days with hogs,
> And shared their milk and maize with hogs,
> Till, I guess, I have learned what pays with hogs
>   And—I have that knowledge to sell!

Surely it seems here as if the Prodigal Son just opened his mouth and said what first occurred to him and—the rhymes fell from heaven. *Ars est celare;* it is only a very great master of verse who can produce this particular illusion.

Much of Kipling's reputation, however, was made by a simpler and more straightforward kind of verse—what must be called for the want of a better name, the ballad. The storming of Valhalla, the conquest of London, went to the tune of such masterpieces as "The Three Sealers," "Macandrew's Hymn," "The *Mary Gloster*" and "Tomlinson" which followed lineally on "The Ballad of East and West," "The King's Mercy" and "The Last Suttee." (There is an interesting late revival or throwback—"Akbar's Bridge"—which stands comparison very fairly.) For this kind of work Kipling was equipped *par excellence;* there must be a story—and the skill to tell it; there must be words, colour and that quality we have already described as "punch." All these he had; and perhaps these "ballads" were his very best work. But the crown was set upon this reputation by a series of "ballads" which are not in any strict sense ballads at all—the *Barrack-room Ballads,* which, so far as form goes, are anything and everything. From this distance of time one may be permitted to wonder a little at the staggering effect of these verses and the sensation they produced—at Professor Masson of Edinburgh University, for instance, and his delight in "Danny Deever." Yet it must be remembered that not only were the *Ballads* first-class in themselves (there are few failures among them) but they broke into what was practically virgin territory. In 1892 the life, habits and manners of the common soldier were not a theme realistically explored by poets: the "drunken private of the Buffs" was as near to it as they cared to go. Now suddenly this uncouth army of drinking, swearing and thoroughly human strangers burst into the domain hitherto reserved for their betters; not only this but they celebrated the invasion in their own language—

—their own H-less, colloquial street-pub-and-barracks talk. In 1922 this was a comparative novelty; if any had recognized the unconscious poetry of our language as spoken by the lower orders, few had ventured to record it in writing, much less in verse; and as a result these raucous battering explosive disconcerting outcries worked on their readers like the war-chorus of some new and fascinating tribe of savages. Kipling, at the moment, was at the height of his passion for soldiers and soldiering; at the height too of his mission to portray the Thing as it Was—and devil take all weak stomachs. The two passions fused together in *Barrack-room Ballads*; how could these not have been a success?

They were free, too, of that quality which militated against the complete popularity of their successors which dealt with the Boer War—the tendency to read lessons and draw morals and indulge in revealing post-mortems. We were not all in those days ready to " admit it frankly as a business people should "—or, if we were, we did not want " it " shouted at us in the pointed and discomfiting speech of the proletariat. Yet the Boer War *Barrack-rooms* are not seriously inferior to their predecessors. In both the critic may observe a blemish we have already noted in the Mulvaney stories—the intrusion of Kipling into his characters. He could not keep his Tommy Atkins *en suite;* the H-less redcoat will break out now and then into Kipling phraseology. How many Tommies of 1892 had ever heard of Homer or knew that he smote a lyre? This particular lapse may be excusable on the ground that it is but Kipling himself speaking in Tommy accents; but (to take a single other instance) would the returning warrior of 'Ackneystadt speak of " rivers that cluck and jeer " or the " quick-breathin' dark " or the " pore dead that look so old An' was so young an hour ago "? The speech of another is a dangerous medium for any writer and especially so for one who stood outside his characters rather than inside them. . . . And yet Kipling was always at his best with soldiers; it is interesting to note

how, much later, when he comes to another soldier of another age—the legionary of Rome—his verse straightway forms fours and marches off again by the left. The Legion poems are all good—Mithras, the British-Roman, Lalage; and perhaps best of all, the "Centurion Song" in the *English History Book*: "Legate! I had the news last night—my cohort ordered home." The fact that these legionaries are not conspicuously Roman makes no matter—any more than the fact that Mulvaney is not very authentically Irish; their views are universal and their verses have the very tramp of armies.

If we begin to look in Kipling's verse for traits we found in his prose we shall very soon see one outstanding example—his method of building on a framework into which are fitted carefully wrought sections each complete in itself. Indeed this is very much more obvious in the poems than in the stories—if only for the reason that all verse, even blank verse, is necessarily more mechanical in form than prose. This balancing and sectioning became at one time almost an obsession. Something of it can of course be seen in such early successes as "The Feet of the Young Men" or "The Song of the English" or "The Last Chantey," in each of which the form is an introduction and tailpiece, a series of reciprocal characters and a paragraphing chorus; the process is simplified further in at least one of them by boxing the compass. But this mechanical construction—writing as it were on ruled lines—is more clearly noticeable in some of the later and smaller poems. Take for instance "Jobson's Amen" where the mechanical antitheses—there are at least four of them—are almost perfectly balanced. The same tick-tock of strophe and antistrophe is seen again in "Jubal and Tubal Cain" and in two poems from the Puck stories—"A St. Helena Lullaby" and "Philadelphia." There is no harm in this, of course, except that it becomes a little tedious if too frequently repeated; its real interest here lies in the fact that we should have expected

to find it from our study of the stories and we do find it and—as we should expect—intensified.

That stories and verse were closely related in Kipling's own mind is shown by the curious technique he adopted—and more and more closely as he went on writing—of linking the one to the other. No story seemed to him capable of standing on its own feet unless it had a little tag of verse attached to it—a summary, a gloss, a footnote of its content. In *Plain Tales* and the earlier works this takes the form of the Chapter Headings; these revived the old Victorian practice of the apt quotation—or even two or three apt quotations—prefaced to the new slice of narrative as a herald blows a blast for the next competitor. Kipling followed the bold example of Scott and invented his own quotations which he ascribed to imaginary sources; thus if they were the less quotations they were the more certain of being apt. But the meagre Chapter Heading did not long content him; presently we find more and more of his poems attached to a story and more and more of his stories demanding an explanatory poem; and finally we arrive at the stage when a story is not complete without two sets of exegetic verses—one before and one after. It was partly his sense of orderliness and decorum—a story should be ushered in and ushered out, everything should be neatly rounded off and taped in at both ends; but far more, as Eliot has emphasized, was it his fundamental need to express the same idea in contrasting media. Francis Adams, carping at *Departmental Ditties* and *Barrack-room Ballads*, discovered in these collections legible preludes for the perusal of all but "envois" addressed to the esoteric only and full of veiled allusions. With less than his usual penetration he found the Envoi to *Departmental Ditties* of "unwarranted obscurity" and suggested that as the *Ditties* were a "feast of patter songs dispensed to the twang of the banjo" the author inserted the Envoi in order to show that he was capable of playing on other instruments. This was said as a sneer; yet in a sense

it came uncommonly near the truth. As Kipling grew older he reached the stage when he was not content to record his story by a single method; whatever he was seeking to convey in it—other than the diversion of a tale—he wished to convey, either in translation or in code, by another means. For this purpose he used the accompanying sets of verses—first one of them and then, when even this seemed insufficient as a glossary, two. This was not done with the intention of elucidating an obscure story; there is no reason to suppose that Kipling saw his stories as obscure nor do the poems invariably elucidate; some indeed render confusion worse confounded—for instance, what on earth has "Naboth's Vineyard" got to do with "Aunt Ellen"? No, the explanation which Adams hit upon in cross-grained jest would appear to be the true one; Kipling did feel the need to play over his theme on another instrument—not to show that he could fiddle as well as trumpet but to render his motif itself in a different way. And the second-instrument rendering, the verse rendering, had no other purpose than this—to state the case differently, on another octave, in another key; and this apparently was one of his objects and reasons in writing verse.

We have already seen that, in the sense of ascent or descent, no real line of progress can be drawn in Kipling's stories and that the same thing applies to his verse. He seemed geared to write at a given level which he reached without apprenticeship and which, with allowance for occasional aberrations, he maintained. Yet we could observe in the stories the modification of old ideas or the introduction of new ones as he progressed along the path of his life; change, incident, growth or adventure so clamoured for expression that even his intensive privacy complex could not altogether exclude them. Thus the time arrived—as it arrives in the case of all fathers—when he was obliged to devise stories for the amusement of his children; and later on the time arrived—as this too arrives in the case of all fathers—when he felt

the urge to make history live for these same children, to clothe the bare bones of the text-books with warm and coloured flesh. Very naturally, as the verses were by this time more or less permanently attached to the stories and kept step with them *pari passu,* we see the same sequence among his poems. The time comes when he writes for the young; then for the not-so-young. He is more successful in the former than in the latter; there is little but charm in the *Jungle Book* poems or the *Just-So's;* on the other hand in some of the Puck poems and in most of those deliberately written for Boy Scouts or the readers of Fletcher's *History* there is a certain smugness; the old hortatory note creeps in, the old priggishness. Kipling may have written the words but one feels that Colonel Blimp is hiding somewhere between the lines while the ancestral Wesleyan is egging them both on. The moral is too obviously pointed; there is something too reminiscent of the " never forget " of the earlier stories. One must remind oneself in extenuation that most of these were written during that lotus-eating period when Kipling was encastled at Bateman's, Burwash, Sussex, very much the established citizen who could be counted upon by authority to say all the right and proper things. Even so, one is left wondering once again that a man so devotedly fond of children should so rarely have depicted them—or even addressed them—as human beings.

Towards the end, as in the stories, the time-track carries his verse into darker realms. We meet in the poem-stream the same obsession with pathology we have met already in the story-stream; and—naturally—at much the same point. As in the stories, obscurity accompanies; " Late Came the God " is a difficult poem to understand and is made no easier by the story to which it is attached; " Rahere " and " Azrael's Count " are little clearer. And the obscurity of these poems is hardly more explicable than their fervour; the stream darkens progressively through moods of terror, self-pity, nostalgia and despair. Finally, with the " Hymn

to Physical Pain "—the poem prefaced to the second-last of his collected stories, " The Tender Achilles "—we reach a stage when mere bodily torment is seen as a positive relief from the hells of the mind:

> The trusty worm that dieth not—
> The steadfast fire also,
> By Thy contrivance are forgot
> In a completer woe.

We have travelled indeed far from " the semi-apes who ranged India's prehistoric clay " and from Ahasuerus Jenkins of the Operatic Own.

If it be true that Kipling's verse and prose are so closely interconnected that both form part of a single complex self-expression, one would expect to find criticism of his verse directed against much the same targets as criticism of his prose. This is to a large extent the case. He is arraigned for the same " painting with a spade "—less noticeable perhaps in verse than in prose because " verse " like " poetry " has licence for lavishness; for the same political bias—which was in point of fact here more viciously expressed; for the same bitterness; and for the same obscurity. There is, however, one other charge laid against his verse which his prose has escaped—that of imitativeness. Kipling, it is said, was never more than the mirror and echo of his environment for the time being; and while this is saying too much, it is of course undeniable that he picked up his material as he went along and that he reflected very clearly the experiences he had been passing through and the persons with whom he had been associating. There was, however, an authentic and individual Kipling who persisted through all these incidentals; and there is a Kipling who persists throughout the body of his verse, although his tone may be that of his recent experience and his accents those of the poet who has recently impressed him. Kipling quite unblushingly bor-

rowed a metre that attracted him and would have counted himself a fool to let it lie unused just because he did not happen to have invented it. He would have agreed with General Booth that there is no reason why "the Devil should have all the best tunes." But, as T. S. Eliot says, "It is never an imitation; the vocabulary is different, the content is different, the rhythms are different . . . . It is due, I think, to a difference of motive; what they [he is speaking of Swinburne and Browning] wrote they intended to be poetry; Kipling was not trying to write poetry at all." This is profoundly true but it needs seeing: the superficial reader, catching a palpable Swinburnian cadence, an unmistakable lilt of Poe or Browning, cries instantly, "Copy-cat!" What Homer "thought 'e might require, 'E went and took—the same as me." But what Kipling went and took he also transformed. In *A Book of Words,* a collection of some of his speeches, he "chapter-headed" thus his Gold Medal speech on Fiction to the Royal Society of Literature:

> Gold and gems we may steal—melt down, re-cut and re-sell them.
> All that we need is the Fire. That we must find in ourselves.

By inference, if a man credits himself with the Fire, he may reach out both hands for the Gold and the Gems.

At the same time it must be admitted that there were probably occasions when Kipling "took" unconsciously; it could hardly be otherwise. Almost every line he wrote—whether in verse or in prose—testifies to the acuteness of his ear; given the appropriate associative stimulus, this perfect instrument swept him, willy-nilly, into the cadences or even into the phraseology of the original. And this subconscious attraction applied not only to his physical ear but to his mental ear as well—that inner ear that picks up an association or an allusion as a receiving set picks up the radiation on

a given wavelength. A word led with Kipling to another word and thence to a phrase and thence to a memory; the transition was swift—so swift that he was himself unaware of its stages or of the distant source from which it started its career.

This receptive and retentive ear should have made Kipling a brilliant parodist; and when he set himself to it—which was comparatively seldom—he was. Incidentally, a comparison between these deliberate parodies and the "echoes" to which we have just been referring is instructive; "The Cure," for instance, is Praedian, but "The Landau" (in *The Muse Among the Motors*) is Praed. It is to this *Muse Among the Motors* that the student of Kipling *qua* parodist must go. Chaucer is very good here and so is Byron; but the gems are Praed (and his "Landau") and Elizabeth Barrett Browning (curiously enough, much more successfully taken off than her husband). Is not this the real Elizabeth Barrett?

> I turned—Heaven knows we women turn too much
> To broken reeds, mistaken so for pine
> That shame forbids confession—a handle I turned
> (The wrong one said the agent afterwards)
> And so flung clean across your English street . . . .

And so on. This is worth quoting if only to show how very different is the derivative note in this deliberate and exquisite mimicry from that of, say, "One Viceroy Resigns" or "Macandrew's Hymn."

In the charge of over-writing—of "painting with a spade" —there is, it must be admitted, a fair amount of substance. Some will find this very characteristic fault of Kipling's more irksome in his verse than in his stories because its excesses can be so much more obvious and gross; others will find it less so because they are prepared to forgive so much more to the medium. Kipling cannot but exhibit the defects of his qualities; and it is not to be denied that there are times

when his vigour descends to crudity—as for instance in "The Hyaenas" or more markedly in "The Bees and the Flies," a poem (even if it be classed as an "echo") for which there is little excuse. There are times when his intensity spills over into hysteria—as in "Loot"; or when the richness of his colouring becomes excess of verbiage—as in "The Song of the Little Hunter." It cannot be denied that the song becomes at times a shout. One hesitates to make too much of an instance already referred to—the deification (it is little less) of Wolcott Balestier in the Dedication to *Barrack-room Ballads*—for it is human to over-extol the friend who has perished; but one can still regret that Kipling found it necessary to overcall his hand so wildly and one can sigh for the comely and far more effective restraint he could exercise in "Merrow Down" where the tragedy touched him still more closely. The trumpetings too on the theme of Sussex—there are several—become a trifle *ennuyant*; as much so as the terrific sergeant-majoring of the "Boy Scouts' Patrol Song" or the Preface to *Land and Sea Tales*. Colonel Blimp had yet to be born when these verses were written but verily he threw his shadow before him! Much has been made by Kipling's critics of these shortcomings and they do exist and they are a pity; but once again let us retain a sense of proportion. For once that the lamp goes up in a blur of smoke and stench, it ten times shines with that clear and steady light few other lamps can give; for once that the hammer falls discordantly on the anvil it twenty times strikes shrewdly on the iron—shrewdly and cleanly as few other hammers can do. No man has so much and so unjustly been reckoned by his failures as has Kipling; and that is an error into which we must not fall.

This is more than ever apparent when we come to consider the criticism of his political verses; these have been attacked with so much animus and so much violence that one might be led to picture him as a second Wilkes—a political pamphleteer who did very little else. Yet the poems on which this

attack has been based and which have gone so far towards earning him the darker side of his reputation are actually few in number and far between in appearance. In the six hundred poems in the Inclusive Edition, hardly a score can be classed as political in any reasonably restricted sense of the word. One cannot call "political" a poem whose intention is to present its readers with a "conspectus" of the Empire and to interest them therein; in "The White Man's Burden," for which he has been so heartily abused and upon which so many of the cheap sneers of the nineteen-twenties were lavished, Kipling had no other object than to show the Empire to his audience—incidentally in this case an American audience—as the fine and noble thing he saw it to be himself. That is hardly "political." It must always be remembered, of course, that nothing on earth is so stale and so dead as yesterday's politics; it is literally impossible for us today to think ourselves into the frame of mind that was exalted—or infuriated—by such verses as "Cleared" or "The Red Earl" which dealt with aspects of the Irish problem of the 'eighties; one can but regard them as boringly perfervid and wonder why he ever found them worth writing. Even Ulster of nineteen-fourteen carries a banner whose colours have faded beyond recognition. "Gehazi" and "The Rowers" may be interesting if one possesses the clue to their meaning but—how many can remember to-day either the home finances or the Venezuelan defaults of 1902? We may be tempted, therefore, to look leniently on Kipling's political squibs as the burnt-out debris from long-past November Fifths; but at the same time we must remember that once on a day these were white-hot fireworks and the ill-feelings that blazed and crackled within them were as explosive as those that beset the Temporary House or the Lublin Poles in nineteen-forty-five. As a people we are far more interested in politics than in poetry and our memories are far longer; little as Kipling wrote in the way of political verse, that little has been held most implacably against him

in those quarters where it gave displeasure. And political peevishness frequently coincided, as we saw in the case of the stories, with the maximum disinclination to study his real principles and aims.

It is not to be denied of course that on these occasions Kipling wrote with a pen dipped in nitre; the Mudir's *kourbash,* pickled in copperas, fell no more cuttingly on the Gihon villagers than did the lash of Kipling's tongue on politicians of the opposite persuasion. Perhaps it is a fair criticism of him—though it applies to four-fifths of humanity—that he was more accomplished in expressing himself unpleasantly than pleasantly, more facile in cursing than kindness. He had a talent for invective picked up perhaps from the robust Hindustani of his childhood's days and enough hate had survived undrained from the epoch of *Baa Baa* to make the concoction of abusive phrases a lifelong amusement; he doted on exhibiting the results. Few stories but contain a sample or two nicely adjusted to the character of the moment; " Ease off, you dirty little forgefilings " (the forward collision-bulkhead to the rivets in " The Ship That Found Herself "); " This yer bog-spavined Kansas sunflower " (Rod on the yellow horse in " The Walking Delegate "); " There they sit, the damned Deevidend-huntin' ship-chandlers, deaf as the adders o' Scripture " (McPhee on the Board of Holdock Steiner and Chase in " Bread upon the Waters "). He could carry this joke—it *is* a joke of sorts for in real life men do not abuse in these terms—to the point where it became more than a little tedious; success here is a question of few and chosen words and he frequently piled epithet on expletive to the pitch of self-destruction—a case in point of " spade-painting " and of his inability to check his own exuberance for the good of his story.

In the same way it is urged against him that in many of his verses he carried bitterness beyond pardonable limits. Yet often he had reason; there was much bitterness for him in the two wars in which he was closely interested and much

cause for plain and pungent speaking. The stock case quoted against him is of course " The Islanders " but there were many others; indeed an anthology of Kipling might well follow the example of *The Week-end Book* and devote a special section to " Hate Poems." Hate was not, as has already been emphasized, the governing impulse in his life but—he hated well in a good cause and " hate poems " offer rich opportunity for that peculiar " punch " he packed. It is difficult to put kick in a love poem and Kipling enjoyed kicking and his kicks were memorable. One may cite the lines on the imaginary death-bed of the Kaiser; or " Mesopotamia ":

> They shall not return to us the resolute, the young,
> The eager and whole-hearted whom we gave;
> But the men who left them thriftily to die in their own dung,
> Shall they come with years and honour to the grave?

Who, recollecting the Mesopotamia campaign of the last war, will say that the hate here is overdone? The theme is repeated in " The Children "—and again the lash was well earned. " Rimmon " holds all the bitterness of disillusion and few will forget the savage resentment in "The Vineyard ":

> At the eleventh hour he came,
> But his wages were the same
> As ours who all day long had trod
> The winepress of the Wrath of God . . . .

Kipling had good cause to be bitter over our ill-contriven wars and those who led us into them unequipped, and bitter he was; but he could be caustic too where no personal interest was involved, as witness his brief annihilation of James the First, " a shifty mother's shiftless son ":

He was the author of his line—
He wrote that witches should be burnt;
He wrote that monarchs were divine,
And left a son who—proved they weren't!

From "Stellenbosch" onwards he is a little terrifying in this mood of castigation, of rods and lightnings; and his frailer or more soft-hearted readers—and not only those of them among the castigated—have not wholly enjoyed it.

Lastly the charge of obscurity. Curiously enough there are on the whole fewer really obscure poems than really obscure stories; perhaps naturally so, since most of the poems are in one form or another straightforward self-expression while in the stories the self-expression is doubly entangled among the veils and wrappings of the narrative. The pathology poems are, of course, "difficult"; yet it can be said in general that they are at least as intelligible as the tales to which they are attached. And a great deal of the more obvious obscurity of his verse derives from his habit of writing in private codes and cryptograms; very often there is a personal meaning hidden behind the ostensible theme, a language of the poem which, if known, makes all plain and straightforward. The poem need not indeed be obscure for this is to take place; there is, for instance, "The Rhyme of the Three Captains" which is on the face of it a plain-sailing ballad of the sea; it requires the footnote to the title and a certain amount of special knowledge to realize that the whole thing is Kipling's outcry over the pirating of his books by American publishers. The "Three Captains" were the three leading English authors who refused to back up his complaint; they are even mentioned—if cryptically—by name in the line "We are paid in the coin of the white man's trade—the *bezant* is *hard, ay* and *black*." But how many readers would pause at this line today or recall the high repute in 1890 of Besant and Black? Many of these poems carry their clue openly to anyone with elementary knowledge

of the events of Kipling's life—" The Nativity," for instance, or the much less pretentious and therefore far more moving " Recantation " (" To Lyde of the Music Halls "). But how many of us nowadays recognize in Diego Valdez " High Admiral of Spain " the young Kipling, the conqueror of London, sighing for the old days of Lahore and the good company of the Haunted Subalterns? How many realize that in the ninth verse of " Merrow Down " there is a photograph of the lost child Josephine?

Looking once again at these elaborate disguises, one wonders—how much more is there that we can none of us see? In how many of his verses has Kipling unbared to us his story and his heart—otherwise so jealously cloaked? Where we come in contact with obscurity, is it only because we lack the key? Prefaced to " Uncovenanted Mercies," the last story in *Limits and Renewals,* will be found the curious little poem called " The Penalty "; according to its position in the books, its date should not be earlier than 1926, but the connoisseur, going by vintages, would have put it somewhere in the period of the Chapter Headings to *The Naulahka.* " Once," it says, " Once in life I watched a star; But I whistled, 'Let her go!' " The star, however, continued to outshine all others and finally:

> When my heavens were turned to blood,
> When the dark had filled my day,
> Furthest, but most faithful, stood
> That lone star I cast away.
> I had loved myself, and I
> Have not lived and dare not die.

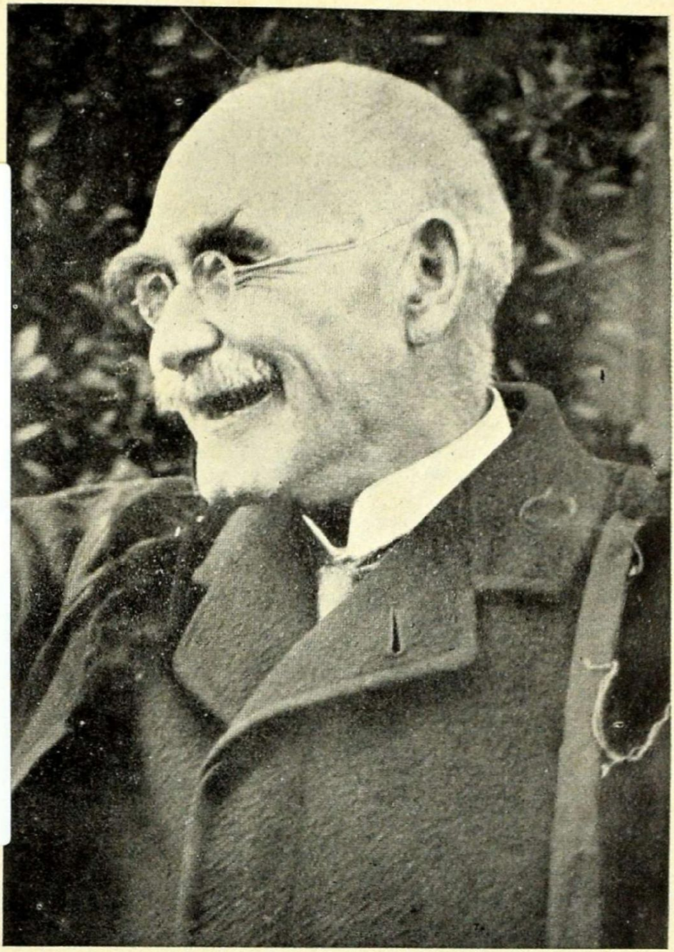
What is the answer to *that* conundrum? Is the Inclusive Edition Kipling's Book of Mother Maturin at last and is that one reason why his verses were written? It is a fascinating thought and pursuit would be a fascinating exercise for the detective-minded; but rewarding headway is unlikely.

There are times too when Kipling's personal feelings—always resentful of suppression—intrude themselves unbidden. That there was a real Kipling who persisted through all this miscellany of styles and subjects is shown very clearly—if indeed demonstration be necessary—in his *vers d'occasion*. There were occasions which he felt impelled to celebrate in verse and there were other occasions which he felt called upon—or was in fact called upon by others—to celebrate; and there is a very noticeable difference in the quality of the verse that resulted. He maintained himself that he could not write to order (" the fact is," he once told the *Cantab*, " I can't do things to order with any satisfaction to myself or to the buyer "), and he refused many tempting requests—tempting in other respects than the merely financial—to do so. For *vers d'occasion* he lacked the equipment of such as Owen Seaman, the faculty of rising to almost any occasion with equal competence and an equal degree of appropriate feeling. Kipling could tackle most occasions but the degree of his success varied; and it was never fully assured unless his " Recessional ", which is in a sense *vers d'occasion*, see which of his occasions he enjoyed celebrating. Compare his " Recessional," which is in a sense *vers d'occasion*, with his " Carol "; the former is perhaps the most magnificent hymn of its particular kind ever written; the latter is no more than everything a Carol ought to be—a typical " performance." The former is inspiration, the latter is an exercise. The earliest of these occasional verses in the Inclusive Edition—it is probably the earliest in chronological sequence also—" The Song of the Women " (on Lady Dufferin's Fund for medical aid to the women of India) has just this same quality of a carefully executed task; one feels young Kuppeleen Sahib was told off to write it. It is the same again with his " Greek National Anthem "—though an interval of over thirty years divides the two. Compare either of these with " Our Lady of the Snows " (which celebrates nothing more soul-stirring than the Canadian Preferential

Tariff of 1897); or with " The Young Queen " (which commemorated the inauguration of the Commonwealth of Australia). Both these subjects quite evidently fired him and the resultant note is very different. It is not always possible to forecast from the title and the subject into which class—the exercise or the inspiration—the verses will fall; one would expect splendour at the death of Roberts—and one gets it; one would expect the same at the death of Rhodes—and does not get it at all; yet Joseph Chamberlain on the next page goes to his grave with full orchestra and chorus. (An interesting example surely of the portrait done with a spade and almost worthy to rank with that of Wolcott Balestier.) One would expect magnificence at the death of King Edward VII and it is poured out full measure and overflowing:

> Who in the Realm today lays down dear life for the
>   sake of a land more dear?
> And unconcerned for his own estate, toils till the last
>   grudged sands have run?
> Let him approach. It is proven here
> Our King asks nothing of any man more than our King
>   himself has done.

Kipling wrote few finer lines than these in all his thousands. At least a reflection of this glory, one feels, should have lighted the passing of Theodore Roosevelt, but the President is fobbed off with a tittuping metre in which nothing sounds sincere. (But after all he *had* once thanked God—and " in our hotel in Washington " too!—that his blood was wholly Dutch.) " The Verdicts " (on Jutland) is inadequate to the occasion; and " The Irish Guards," while nearer it, still falls something short of what one would have expected—from Kipling—on the regiment in which his son had served and died. But is not this list of successes itself revealing? Our Lady of the Snows, The Young Queen, The Dead King, Lord Roberts; the Empire, the Emperor, the Master-Gunner and



The Lord Rector

A happy Press snapshot of Kipling at St. Andrews University. One of the few post-war pictures which show him smiling

Jang-i-Lat; these—and not unexpectedly if we have assessed Kipling correctly—were the occasions which inspired him.

Many columns have been written in an attempt to answer the double-barrelled question, "Did Kipling write 'poetry'? If so, which of his writings are 'poems'?" It is, of course, an absurd and unanswerable question because it takes us at once into a field where there are no exact definitions—indeed, no definitions at all. If Kipling did not write "poetry" what did he write? "Verse"? "Great verse"—as T. S. Eliot puts it? But what is "verse" and how does it become "great"? Nobody has ever answered this last question or explained just at what precise point "verse" passes into "poetry," as it must do somewhere sometime if the two are classes of writing which coexist in a vertical scale. Nobody ever will or can answer it, for the point at which this Rubicon is drawn is very largely a matter of individual and varying taste. Kipling wrote many lines of metrical composition which were clearly not "poetry" and never could become "poetry"; but he also ranged continually over that indeterminate area for which, despite our centuries of literature, we have still no name; that No Man's Land which lies between what is commonly called "verse" and what is commonly called "poetry" and where a chance word or a chance inflection may carry the wanderer over either border. As Eliot very shrewdly observes, "the writer whose work is *always* clearly verse, is not a great verse writer: if a writer is to be that, there must be some of his work of which we cannot say whether it is verse or poetry." This is a little involved, but at least it entitles us to call Kipling a "great verse writer" or a "poet" as we feel inclined. It will make very little odds. In the course of this present chapter several passages have been quoted; if some of these are not "poetry," what are they? But if any advantage seems to be gained by calling them "verse" or "great verse," by all means let it so be done.

What, it may be asked, did he think of it himself? Did he regard himself as a " poet " or not? Sir Ian Hamilton quotes a letter from Mrs. Fleming in which she says that all his life her brother " drew a careful distinction between verse and poems ": at one of their last meetings he credited himself with a dozen "poems," an estimate which he immediately afterwards reduced by half: " The rest were just verses." In view of what has just been written, this carries us little further: quite probably he did not take it very seriously himself. Kipling's method—we have his own word for it and in any case it stands out in all his work—was to turn over the ideas in his mind till one of them came clamouring for expression. He considered this application carefully and if he decided that the time had come for granting it, he resolved simultaneously on the form in which the idea was to be presented. With the form came the words—or at least the appropriate class or kind of words. He then addressed himself to the task of putting these words on paper. Whatever his idea was, he chose for it the vehicle that seemed to him its due, and if a single vehicle would not carry all its import, then he employed two.

There is, too, another way of looking at this vexed question of " poetry " and " verse." Most of us speak—as Kipling spoke to his sister—as if they occupied defined levels in a scale of values; as if " verse " were a sort of B-Grade " poetry " into which by rare flashes of inspiration, it might on occasion be transmuted; and as if " poetry " were a sort of super-verse and might, if not constantly kept up to a white heat of excellence, fall back into the lower category. But perhaps this idea, this way of looking at it, is all nonsense. Perhaps there are not two categories—poetry and prose—but three—poetry, verse and prose. So that it is not and never can be a question of a poet falling back into verse or of a verse-writer suddenly leaping up into poetry; these practitioners proceed on separate and disconnected lines, in regions of their own; and a great writer of verse is to be

ranked as highly in our estimation as a great poet, or a great writer of prose. It becomes wholly a question of the degree of success achieved in mutually exclusive fields. This may be a more commonsense view than the other and at least it rescues us from those endless adjustments of values, that futile plotting of dividing lines in an area where for lack of definition no lines can really be drawn.

But at best the discussion is of academic interest. What is not of academic interest is to say that when he wished to express himself in metre Kipling had almost every resource at his command; and that he traversed the entire field that was open to him. Hardly another man has brought together a mass of work so varied and so universal in which there appears so often the undeniable touch of the master. The label attached to this achievement—" verse," " great verse," " poetry "—is immaterial.

IX

PROSPICE

> " But ' What should they know of England ' was written by Kipling "
>
> JOHN PUDNEY, *Who Only England Know*

THE reasons for the decline of Kipling's literary reputation should now be tolerably clear; what Sir George MacMunn called " the greatest phenomenon in literature " is seen to be at least a natural phenomenon. To begin with, the first-rank critics, the king-makers, the big guns of Fleet Street and Bloomsbury, turned hostile—or what was worse, indifferent. The spectacle of an author widely read by the

English-speaking races but ignored by their literary pundits is not an unusual one—though it may not often occur in the case of an author of Kipling's eminence. We are a curious people; we do not, as a whole, care much about literature and still less about literary criticism; yet if the Sunday papers and the literary weeklies assure us repeatedly that X is a great writer we are prepared to believe it—although we ourselves are unable to read with pleasure a word that this genius has penned; on the other hand if our hearts assure us that Y is superb but the pundits mention him only with sneers or not at all, we read him—we continue to read him—but under an uncomfortable suspicion that our personal judgment is at fault. From this weak-kneed and illogical attitude of his " public " Kipling suffered not a little.

There were, however, more solid reasons for the desertion of many of his admirers. In the first place the world—for a time—ran away from him and his mind was not nimble enough, his ideas were not sufficiently adaptable, to enable him to catch it up. We have seen that one of his weaknesses was the absorption of fixed notions; whether from indolence or from cowardice or from loyalty to their original sponsors, he shrank from examining these ideas or from questioning their validity. Consequently, when several of them proved of at least doubtful trustworthiness, it took him a long time to make the necessary adjustments in his mind. His confidence was shaken—his confidence in himself and in the inspired rightness of his knowledge; and a diffident or uncertain Kipling was a contradiction in terms incapable of producing his best work. When the march of events made it appear that he had too greatly simplified his notion of the Law or that the British Army was not necessarily an all-conquering organization divinely provided for the better government of the Others, he was nonplussed. In such a difficulty his pen lost its conviction; and to convince was an essential part of Kipling's stock-in-trade. He said a thing

was so and it *was* so; but if he could not say it was so, where was he?

Secondly, he committed the unpardonable offence, in a British writer, of altering his style. We have seen why he did this and we should now be in a position to appreciate his reasons; but he did not make clear these reasons at the time—he strove in fact to keep them privately to himself—and the great mass of his readers failed quite naturally to perceive them. They felt only that their author was serving them out a new diet which, true to form and tradition, they condemned as *ersatz* and which—true to form again—they knew to be unpalatable *because* they would not taste it.

Perhaps too his attitude was always too subjective and personal. It is a fine thing to be the Dreamer Whose Dreams Come True but only so long as they do come true; that is to say, so long as others can, by a sheer *tour de force,* be made to dream the same dreams. "When Brahm ceases to dream, the Gods die." So-much of Kipling was photographic reproduction; so-much was sheer creation. He created a kind of soldier; he created a kind of India; and for a time the vitality and the verisimilitude of these creations carried his readers away. But it was a species of confidence trick for the success of which it was essential that these readers should cease to question; for the moment the confidence trickster is suspected, he is undone. Yet it was also inevitable that in time they *should* question and when the evil day dawned there was no escape from the processes of nature. Revulsion at once set in; "this fellow," it was said, "has been leading us astray; he was never, it seems, either in the North-west Frontier campaigns or in the Sudan; he has been telling us merely what he thought these affairs were like. This India of his is not at all like the India we are beginning to read about in the daily papers, it never existed, it is a fraud and so is he. As for his Tommies and his White Man's Burden—pshaw!'" This was in no way Kipling's fault; he had no intention of deceiving any-

one; his confidence trick was unpremeditated, it was the natural expression of his genius. He was Painting the Thing—and so on. It was not his fault that he saw that Thing so clearly and that his vision of it was so perfect and complete that his readers could see nothing else—not even the reality; it was his misfortune that when they began to question and suspect, they turned from him as from a cheat. It is no doubt an illogical act to forswear a writer of imaginative fiction because he has presented not the hard fact but his own gloss upon it; but the reading public is an illogical creature—and the critic is in the last resort its mirror and servant. The secession had the secondary disadvantage that it debarred many of his former admirers from reading his later work and so strengthened the hand of those who decried him as written out. It does not however excuse or condone the sheeplike acceptance of this last fabrication by so many who should have been at least sufficiently grateful for past pleasures to allow their benefactor a second chance.

That seems to be roughly the history of "the greatest phenomenon in literature." "But is it necessarily a closed history? In other words, is there a possibility that Kipling may yet, in the parlance of the sporting reporters, "stage a come-back," that he may once again be recognized as an outstanding genius of our race and our writing? Is there anything in him that can take to itself fresh breath and live—this time indefinitely? It may perhaps be touch and go. He will soon have been ten years dead and there are many clamouring on the stairs and in the ante-chambers of the temple; ours is an increasingly noisy and an increasingly rapid age wherein great reputations are hard to make—and *a fortiori* increasingly hard to remake. The clever young men of the 'twenties did not themselves survive long but they survived long enough to slay Kipling—so far as it was in their power to slay him—very effectively; and the dead rise again with equal difficulty whether they have been struck down by the sword of the chevalier or poisoned by some scul-

lion in the commissariat. Yet there are indications that Kipling will come back into his own—and if he does, he will never again lose it. It is still possible, almost anywhere, to raise an argument about his person or his works; dead or alive, he retains his essential gift for provocation. He appears, somewhere, in every third periodical one picks up. Of late years he has been taken more seriously than at any time since the century began. A critic of standing—Edward Shanks—has treated him in a work which was neither eulogy nor denigration but aimed at a sober estimate. A poet—T. S. Eliot—has devoted thought and judgment to the consideration of his verse. A publisher has published this book.

But if Kipling is to be restored to his throne it must be the young people and not the elders who put him there; and though the elders may well recall him to notice, the real rediscovery must come from the young people themselves. Will this happen? Again there are indications. Mr. John Pudney recently published a book of travel impressions which he called *Who Only England Know*; for our present purpose its interest resides in its "Title piece." Here Mr. Pudney ingenuously tells us that he looked up the source of the title he had chosen for his book "in a dictionary of quotations"; the words "were going round and round in my head; I put them down to the liberal wisdom of some writer of the eighteenth century. But 'What should they know of England' was written by Kipling." If this does not constitute rediscovery, what does! At first sight the fact and the confession may seem wholly depressing. Mr. Pudney is himself a writer of verse; surely if he were not acquainted with the second line of "The English Flag," then Kipling must be dead indeed. But there is a brighter side to it also; Mr. Pudney did discover and profit thereby as he goes on handsomely to admit. "I grew up in a time and a situation which couldn't stomach its Kipling" . . . but . . . "once away from England, upon ships, in camps, in the Bight of Benin, up the Nile, in Malta, Kipling seems to express

subtleties of temper and atmosphere unheeded by any other writer." Mr. Pudney describes his book as the "log of a wartime journey of unintentional discovery of my fellow countrymen"; it has led him happily to the "unintentional discovery" of at least one "fellow countryman" who may stand him in good stead.

Whether others of that generation which "couldn't stomach its Kipling"—or was told it couldn't—will follow suit, the next few years should decide. It will depend very largely on the mood which follows on the present war. If we fall back again into a trough of complacency and cynicism and "security" and "cleverness" such as succeeded on the last war, there is little hope; but if the soul of the young generation remains alive, and does not rot in its body, it may be otherwise. For the fact seems to have been demonstrated—and not only by Mr. Pudney—that whenever action and adventure revive, young men will discover that there was once a man called Rudyard Kipling who said almost everything on these subjects as well as it is in human power to do.

It is sometimes said that Kipling's work cannot hope to survive because so much of it is so irreparably "dated"; the craze for turning over the pages of old photograph albums is dead; nothing makes so poor a breakfast as the remains of last night's supper; and that is all that Kipling has now to offer. The Simla of the 'eighties, it is said, is as extinct as the Mutiny or the Mysore Wars—indeed almost more so; Pyecroft's Navy is as *demode* as Mulvaney's Army; even Captain Mankeltow (later Lord Marshalton) and his Royal British Artillery scurrying over the veldt have become creatures as divorced from modern warfare—indeed more so again—as the bowmen of Crecy. The stories in which they figured are a Bayeux tapestry of conditions which will never conceivably return and yet have not receded sufficiently into the past to become material for the "costume" novel; such stories, then, will find no readers now. There is an element

of truth in this but it need not be exaggerated; the Lower Deck is still very much the Lower Deck and someone very like Ortheris was recently fighting in Libya and in Italy and tucked away in odd corners in India this or that character from the *Plain Tales* still peeps out at the changing world. But quite apart from these survivals there is an immense amount of Kipling that hardly dates at all; especially, of course, in his later work. "All first-class stuff," he said to the boys of Wellington College, "is as good and new and as fresh now as the day it was made." That is a statement which requires qualification, but one which applies within limits to Kipling's own case. Ships, bees, polo ponies, panthers and locomotives will talk in nineteen-forty-five—if they talk at all—much as they talked half a century ago. Hobden is still Hobden as he was under Fabricius and Ogier and William of Warenne. Kim's grandson could repeat his grandsire's adventures with an exact replica of his grandsire's Lama. Picture history remains picture history; dogs remain dogs. In how many classrooms does King still ply his acrid tongue; and on how many East-faring vessels are there still "men in pajamas sitting abaft the funnel and swapping lies of the purple seas"? Are there no ghost children today or ghost lovers? No Chapins to find themselves called back to another Friars Pardon?

By some or other among these must Kipling's "come-back" be "staged." By which?

Under no circumstances will this book attempt a prize-list among Kipling's works; that is a subject on which no two persons, be they enthusiasts or detractors, will ever agree; eccentrically varying awards have already been made. He himself believed that his daemon stood by him in "The Phantom Rickshaw" (!), the *Jungle Books*, *Kim* and all the Puck stories. Gosse (with of course but a sample to go upon) picked out "Without Benefit of Clergy," "The Man Who Would Be King," "Marrowbie Jukes" (!). "The Return of Imray," "The Taking of Lungtungpen," "The Incarna-

tion of Krishna Mulvaney" (!). Barrie enthroned "The Man Who Would Be King" as "the most audacious thing in fiction." Arnold Bennett, cooled by *Stalky* and positively chilled by *Kim,* thought "On Greenhow Hill" "among the very best . . . a very impressive and fundamentally true story." *The Times Literary Supplement,* in its obituary notice, confirmed Bennett on "Greenhow Hill" and added: "The Return of Imray," "Without Benefit of Clergy" and "The Mark of the Beast" (!) —a singularly out-of-date selection, by the way, to be made in 1936. In the matter of verse Kipling himself chose for the Queen's Doll's House in 1924, "If," "The Children's Song," "The Way through the Woods," "Merrow Down" (one knows why), "The Fairies' Siege" (i.e. The Dreamer Whose Dreams Come True), "A Charm," "Recessional," "The Prayer," "Mother o' Mine" and "Eddi's Service" (!). That sound judge Owen Seaman, writing many years earlier, picked out for mention "The First Chantey" (!) ("Mine was the woman to me, darkling I found her"), "Ford of Kabul River," "Buy My English Posies" and "The Last Suttee." The atrabilious Adams plumped for "Mandalay." I have not been able to resist a few exclamation marks, for some of these selections do seem indeed incredible; I do not doubt that any list I attempted to prepare would be still more liberally bespattered with the exclamation marks of others. Violent indeed are the reactions, even today, to any proffering of "the six best poems" or the "twelve best stories" of Rudyard Kipling. No such target shall be set up here.

Yet if a claim is made that a great volume of Kipling's work survives undated and can survive undated almost indefinitely, and if new readers are to be sent to Kipling and induced to make trial first of this section of his work, perhaps some concrete suggestions for their guidance should be offered. What stories could one choose, not necessarily as Kipling's best, but as most likely to interest a new reader coming to him today? One would be obliged to begin with one of the

great quartette from *Life's Handicap* and for present purposes (and indeed perhaps on sheer merit) it might be "Without Benefit of Clergy." "Red Dog" from *The Jungle Books;* perhaps "Badalia Herodsfoot"; certainly "Bread Upon the Waters." Perhaps—but only if one could rely on the pupil's stomach for sentiment—"The Brushwood Boy." "Mrs. Bathurst"? Or is the early cinematograph that toured with Phyllis's Circus too dating? Unquestionably "They," "An Habitation Enforced," "Friendly Brook" and "My Son's Wife"; as unquestionably "The Wish House," "The Janeites" and "A Madonna of the Trenches." And one dog story—perhaps the best dog story—"The Woman in His Life," if only for its association with two of the most moving poems about dogs that have ever been written. Fourteen stories have been mentioned; fourteen very varied stories; unless the experiment is a failure, these should send our new reader seeking others for himself, turning back perhaps to sample some of the earlier work, perhaps to discover Mulvaney (whom he has not so far met). If that can be made to happen, he is lost, he is ensnared, he has fallen under the spell; if he has in any measure the ear for words, surely he must go on reading and reading and reading.

But so far, except in the case of one or two stories which have poems attached to them, he has been given no verse. Here the selection must be made on other grounds; it is not a question of the dated or undated, for "verse" shares this at least with "poetry"—that its merits do not date. Once again, let there be no prize-giving; once again, let there be no talk of "poems" and non-"poems." Let us suppose too that our reader has already in one way or another encountered—he could hardly have avoided them—"If," "Recessional," "The Way Through the Woods," "The Last Chantey," "The Ballad of East and West" and "Gunga Din." One might say to him, then, "In one *genre* of Kipling's metrical writing it might be worth your while to look at 'The Answer,' 'The Recall,' 'The Legend of Mirth,'

'The Roman Centurion's Song,' 'The Voortrekker,' 'The Return of the Children' (the poem attached to 'They'), 'The Widower,' 'The Dead King,' and 'To the Companions' (Horace, Ode 17, Book V). And in quite a different *genre* you might perhaps try 'The Broken Men,' 'The Explorer,' 'The Derelict,' 'Dirge of Dead Sisters,' 'The King' ('Farewell Romance'), 'The Land,' 'Henry VII and the Shipwrights,' 'Four-Feet,' and 'Et Dona Ferentes.'" . . . "If you have any ear at all," one might say to him, "if you can take any pleasure in the exquisite and masterly handling of words, if you enjoy the sight of a craftsman in complete control of his tools and his material—you should find something somewhere in these which will interest you."

The same sort of tiresome person who asked whether Kipling wrote "poetry" will doubtless wish to be told whether Kipling was greater in prose or in verse. All such questions of course verge on the imbecile; so many personal considerations enter into the answer, so much depends on points of individual taste, so much turns on what constitutes "greatness" in prose or "greatness" in verse that it becomes a waste of time to reply to such inquiries; the questioner is better referred to a study of Kipling's works and adjured to form his own opinion. He may counter this with the further question—"How did Kipling regard himself? As a writer of prose, or a writer of verse? By which did he set the most store?" From the remnants of self-revelation vouchsafed in *Something of Myself,* one would imagine that he put the stories first; on the other hand we have Beresford's word for it that at school "Gigger" wrote his prose on ordinary foolscap but his verse on cream-laid notepaper. There may not be very much in this; a short story covers a great wad of cream-laid notepaper which is expensive stuff and hard to come by; on the other hand, it may mean that Kipling, in his early stages at least, regarded verse as the higher form of self-expression. It may be so; there is nothing in any case to show that he retained this valuation in later life.

Manifestly verse, which allows so much more room for the emergence of the author's own personality, must always have appealed to one whose work was so introvert and subjective as was Kipling's; his personal intrusions could there be much less jarring and conspicuous and nobody could take him to task for distorting his characters with language they would never have used. But it is far more probable than he regarded his verse and his prose not as " separate sides to my head " but as wheels in a single vehicle, cylinders in a single engine. Sometimes he felt that his subject could best be expressed in verse, sometimes in prose, sometimes variantly in both. One must not overlook the curious and continuous development of the Chapter Headings into a double-barrelled explanatory poem. If this has any significance, it must mean that, latterly at any rate, Kipling worked in a medium in which both verse and prose were complementary elements and in which—obviously—neither could be thought of as superior to the other.

But if Kipling is to live he must live as all surviving authors have lived—by some quality of appeal which is universal and timeless. How does he stand in that respect? As regards timelessness, it has already been shown that there is a vast body of his work which reads to-day as well as when it was written and which will read fifty years hence as freshly as it reads to-day. As regards universality, he has himself done his best to disguise this by the consistently individual and personal methods he employed. Yet it is there. One is tempted to re-invoke comparison with a much earlier author—to whom he was once or twice indebted for an " echo "—Robert Burns. Burns could descend to levels Kipling would never have dreamt of; he may or may not have risen to correspondingly greater heights; at all events they had " the stars and the puddles " in common. Like Kipling, much of what Burns wrote was for the moment, some of it was political, quite a proportion of it was inspired by personal animus or enthusiasm. Like

Kipling he suffered from a period of eclipse and denigration which—and may not Kipling therefore do the same? —he triumphantly survived. Imperfect and careless, jangling with false notes yet stocked with the unforgettable phrase, noisy and impudent, half public-house and half Olympus, Robert Burns lived—and lives on—because he had in him something for everyone. So too has Kipling. Much of Kipling's work may have been faulty; it was didactic, it was mannered, it was intricate; it showed up vast lacunae in his mind and in his way of thinking; if he had an infallible eye and an infallible ear, he had by no means always an infallible taste; his worst fell disastrously below his best. But—he brought the universe before the multitude, he had a note in his music for every listener, he threw his pearls to every corner of the market-place. He covered the world and carried it as a toy in his hand; if his own heart remained hidden, he had looked closely into the hearts of others—and he shared his knowledge of them freely. And whether or not his knowledge were inspired and whether or not it were knowledge, he made it seem—so very often—as if it were the absolute Logos of God. In the wide humanity of his dealings he touched everyone sometime somewhere. Whether or not he will return to his own, to mount again that pinnacle which he once justly occupied, will depend on the accidents of time and chance; but quite certainly it will not be for lack of the essential qualities. They may be hidden, they may be obscured by that dense veil of Kipling he drew over everything he wrote; but they are there, the search for them is made very pleasant and even the veil itself is a charming thing in which to lose oneself.

Kipling had his own views on this question of survival and we might do worse than conclude this book by considering his estimate of the function and destiny of the writer as he expounded it to the Royal Society of Literature in return for their Gold Medal. It was always his professed belief that a

writer is a creature who can hardly be said to work of his own volition; he is impelled by a daemon to whom he must surrender himself and he records on paper what it is " laid upon him " to utter. If the daemon " be utterly present " and the writer " swerve not from his behest " then " The word that he gives shall continue, whether in earnest or jest." But it is never in the writer's power to foresee—much less shape—the end to which his work may come. " The true nature and intention of a writer's work," Kipling said to the Royal Society, " does not lie within his own knowledge ": and he instanced Swift's *Gulliver,* a madman's " dreadful testimony against his fellow-kind" converted by the centuries into a " pleasant tale for the young." A writer cannot stand as an individual; he must merge into the whole corpus of writing; then only, by losing his self, shall he save it. " The utmost a writer can hope," he said, " is that there may survive of his work a fraction good enough to be drawn upon later, to uphold or to embellish some ancient truth restated, or some old delight reborn." If this is the case, then by corollary it should follow that if the work of a writer does contain that qualifying fraction, that writer has at least a chance of survival. So long as the corpus of literature continues—and surely that must be indefinitely—then he, embedded therein whether as jewel or fossil or plain utilitarian ore, must continue in and with it. And, lying so embedded, he has always the chance of being uncovered, unearthed, refound.

Will anyone in his senses deny this chance to Rudyard Kipling?

APPENDIX

List of Books Consulted

Author's Note: *This is* not *a bibliography to Kipling*: *merely what I have read while writing this book.*

Kipling's Works *and*

Adams, Francis: *Essays in Modernity.*

Ballard, Ellis A.: *Catalogue of My Kipling Collection.*

Bennett, Arnold: *Books and Persons.*

Beresford, G. C.: *Schooldays with Kipling.*

Clarke, W. J. (" G. F. Monkshood "): *Less Familiar Kipling and Kiplingana.*

Dobree, Bonamy: *The Lamp and the Lute.*

Dunsterville, General: *Stalky's Adventures.*

Eliot, T.S.: *A Choice of Kipling's Verse.*

Falls, Cyril: *Rudyard Kipling, A Critical Study.*

Gardiner, A. G.: *Prophets, Priests and Kings.*

Gosse, Edmund: Articles in the *Century.*

Guedalla, Philip: *Men and Letters.*

Hamilton, Sir Ian: *Listening for the Drums.*

Harris, Frank: *Contemporary Portraits.*

Hopkins, R. T.: *Rudyard Kipling, A Literary Appreciation.*

James, Henry: *Mine Own People* (Introduction).

Jensen, J. V.: *Rudyard Kipling.*

Le Gallienne, Richard: *Rudyard Kipling, A Criticism.*

Leeb-Lundberg, W.: *Word Formation in Kipling.*

Livingston, Flora V.: *Bibliography of the Works of Rudyard Kipling* (1927) with *Supplement* (1938).

McCarthy, Justin: *Reminiscences.*

MacMunn, Sir George: *Rudyard Kipling, Craftsman.*
Kipling's Women.

Martindell, E. W.: *Bibliography to the Works of Rudyard Kipling.*
Muddiman, Bernard: *The Men of the 'Nineties.*
Ogden, James R.: *Harrogate's Gift to the Nation.*
Ponton, Dorothy: *Kipling at Home.*
Pudney, John: *Who Only England Know.*
Rice, Howard C.: *Rudyard Kipling in New England.*
Scott, Dixon: *Men of Letters.*
Shanks, Edward: *Rudyard Kipling, A Study in Literature and Political Ideas.*
Squire, Sir John: *Essays on Poetry.*
Swinnerton, Frank: *The Georgian Literary Scene.*
Thirkell, Angela: *Three Houses.*
Thomas, Lowell: *Great Kipling Stories* (Introduction).
Van de Water, F. F.: *Rudyard Kipling's Vermont Feud.*
Wilson, Edmund: *The Wound and the Bow.*

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